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Articles

- 148 FRANCIS WILLIAMS
The New Book of Snobs : The Press
151 H. F. ELLIS
No Reply from Bournemouth
153 B. A. YOUNG
Current Arithmetic
154 LORD KINROSS
Pygmalion in Mayfair
156 DAPHNE BOUTWOOD
How Skeen Are You?
160 JO PACKER
Down on My Knees
176 J. B. BOOTHROYD
Interview

Verse

- 164 R. P. LISTER
On Becoming Man
174 E. V. MILNER
I Think Continually

Fiction

- 172 CLAUD COCKBURN
We're Strangers Here Ourselves—I

Features

- 158 REVELATIONS OF A FASHION
SPY
Alex Atkinson with Ronald Searle
162 FOR WOMEN
164 TOBY COMPETITIONS
165 ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT
Percy Somerset
166 IN THE CITY
Lombard Lane
166 IN THE COUNTRY
Gregory Blaxland
175 SPORTING PRINTS
Hewison : Judy Grinham

Criticism

- 167 BOOKING OFFICE
Richard Mallett : By a Different Route
169 THEATRE (Eric Keown)
170 FILMS (Richard Mallett)
171 RADIO (Henry Turton)

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*For overseas rates see page 176

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E

The London Charivari

MR. MIKOYAN says that Russia wants to end the cold war. Is he serious? The cold war forces the U.S.A. to devote 60 per cent of its Budget to defence and so cuts America's standard of living and foreign aid programme. Mr. Khrushchev says that the war of ideologies will be settled on the economic front, not by force of arms, but the cold war prevents the U.S.A. from demonstrating the true superiority of capitalism in terms of goods and peaceful persuasion. The cold war costs every American at least another Cadillac in every garage, the gratitude of millions who ask alms, and exceptional wear and tear of the nervous system. Mr. Mikoyan knows this. And so perhaps do the Wall Street business men who tried to see him as an angel of peace: Cold war or cold thaw, the boys in the Kremlin seem to have the advantage.

Words, Words, Words

HEARTS sank last week when the word Summit came back, and weren't much



lifted up when a headline nutshellled prospects neatly with "WE'RE READY TO TALK."

Blackboard Jungle

TEACHERS everywhere, including the one who was chased through the streets by angry pupils a few weeks

back, may have felt some dismay over the Ministry of Education report that British boys and girls are now "taller, heavier and better shod." Press comment, however, has done its best to console by giving most of the headlines to the obesity statistics, and perhaps nervous masters would do well to reflect that with the increasing cubic capacity of the individual child the number in any standard-size class is bound to diminish. Moreover, agility is bound to decline. A teacher in anything like condition should be able to get the better of twenty clumsy fat boys where thirty-five thin ones would have beaten him every time.

No Bags, Either?

A BRITISH RAILWAYS magazine criticizes porters who appear on the platforms



without their hats or jackets. Passengers would be quite satisfied if they just appeared on the platforms.

Styles for He-Men

MEN's long woollen pants have always presented something of an advertising problem. For generations it was the custom to show men of distinction discussing weighty affairs in their three-ply and sometimes even frolicking with similarly attired wives and children (thus creating curious misconceptions about the British way of life in less happy lands). More recently,



"Oh, I don't know—lots of young men start as little horrors and end up as intensely lovable cuddly old softies."

inexhaustible quantities of long woollen pants have been sold with the explanation that they were surplus to the needs of high-ranking officers of the armed forces. Now the market is being tempted with "anti-freeze Antarctic submarine long-pants," which were "a very special issue to submarine convoy personnel going through Antarctic channels." Any day now the surplus Hunt-Hillary underwear should be available. The launching of the first manned satellite may be expected to release a particularly rugged line of Galactic Travellers' Double-Knit, 24-ounce Combs.

Pennies from Heaven

THE British Museum has bought £50,000-worth of meteorites, part of the collection of a Dr. Nininger, of Arizona. These will not be on show until experts have been through them for impostors in the shape of nose-cone fragments.

Rissoles, Sir John?

THE principle behind the Inland Revenue's decision that meal vouchers are taxable but will not for the time being be taxed provided that their value does not exceed three shillings per head per day, could with advantage be extended to the expense-account world. The health of senior executives is known to be prejudiced by the rich business luncheons they are constantly called upon to face. If three shillings a head were the allowable

limit this grave problem would be solved. It would also be pleasant, for the rest of us, to see whether these tycoons could order baked beans and a cup of tea for each other with quite the off-hand magnificence with which at present they call for oysters and Chablis. A third point, hardly worth mentioning, is that they would have more time for business.

Can It Sound Sarcastic?

THE Catering Trades Exhibition includes a slot-machine which utters the words "Thank You." Sardonic visitors are expecting to get a lot of quiet fun out of purchasing the courtesy with a fake coin.

A Bas La Lanterne

THE architectural students who marched in procession to boo buildings they disliked prove, among a good deal else, that the British student is becoming as brouhaha-conscious as his coeval in Paris or Baghdad. It is only a step now to breaking the windows of firms who publish bad verse or to painting slogans on heretical clerics. Probably many passers-by still do not realize that buildings are things that can be good or bad and certainly do not realize they can rabble-rouse. We have been suffering since the last war from an emotion-famine; politics and literature have been unhealthily douce.



"Their decision to spend 3 dollars out of 5 on arms is of course no reflection on Comrade Mikoyan's recent visit."

We have also been suffering from a feeling of helplessness about what happens to our cities. I hope the protesters are not going to restrict themselves to blame. Let them clap St. Paul's and cry "Encore!" at Henry VII's Chapel and shout slogans of detailed appreciation at features of buildings they admire.

Sitting Room Only

LONDON TRANSPORT chiefs, having cut the buses because of television, are now having to put up with complaints from people who can't get home to watch it.

Food Fun

HOW many of us are eating those tins of foreign "Spooky Foods" the advertisers say we're buying like mad? My bet is that for every gastronome reverently sampling seasoned bumble-bees or roasted silkworms with his sherry there are ten honest decent families nerving themselves to open their Joke Tin, fleeing as the appalling contents clunk out, creeping back as the bravest of the group offers the saucer to the cat. "Golly, Pussy's licking them!" The trouble with eating any new creature is that it remains a creature. Whale-meat never caught on because it never became a substance with a substance-name like beef or mutton. (Call mutton Hot Sheep, as at the "Black Mischief" banquet, and you are definitely offput.) Perhaps this is all tied up with our love for the animal world; perhaps not. The insect world is what these exotic tins are offering us; and dammit, we British may not love insects but we don't eat them.

Light Woman Programme

SINCE Orson Welles panicked America with news of a Martian invasion nothing so sensational has come out of the loud-speakers as the recent documentary on call-girls as business equipment. The B.B.C. is understood to be negotiating for the transcription of the programme in the hope of getting steam radio back in favour on this side too.

— MR. PUNCH

"We're Strangers Here Ourselves"

A novelette of the future, by
CLAUD COCKBURN
begins on page 172



"Don't blame me."

THE NEW BOOK OF SNOBS



In 1846-7 Thackeray wrote "The Snobs of England" in PUNCH, later reprinted as "The Book of Snobs." In this series snobbery is brought up to date, but the title decorations are from Thackeray's own drawings.

FRANCIS WILLIAMS on The Press

FOR some snobbery is a vice. For others an art. For the press, however, it is a business.



Time was, it is true—and there is no use burkeing the fact—when journalists were pretty low fellows.

"Your connection with any newspaper," Walter Scott observed briskly to Lockhart when the question of a post with the press came up between them, "would be a disgrace and a degradation. I would rather sell gin to poor people and poison them that way."

And Queen Victoria remarked sharply to Lord Palmerston apropos the carryings on of *The Times* that this was what came of allowing journalists into "the circles of higher society," a thing, she sensibly said, she had never been able to see the need for since it was unthinkable that any lady or gentleman would wish to consort with journalists unless compelled by duty to do so.

But times have changed. Gin and journalism have both gone up in the world. Even press photographers are wearing smart suits instead of those dirty raincoats with belts which used to add a macabre touch to the scarlet uniforms and morning coats at openings of Parliament and such-like high affairs. As for the circles of higher society, the dedicated characters who wear themselves out writing gossip columns assure me the trouble with them is not getting in but getting out again unscathed. Even humorous writers are thought better of than they used to be. Thackeray worried about Mr. Punch's liking for low company. He would not need to now.

Lord Northcliffe was the first to insist that his young men should go to good tailors. He also required that they should write as if they did. "Remember," he said, "the readers of the *Daily Mail* all earn £1,000 a year." When some of the bolder spirits questioned this he amplified: "They all like to think of themselves as thousand-a-year people at any rate, and they all want to read what thousand-a-year people do." This, of course, was in the days when those with £1,000 a year were somebody, and not simply upstairs people in converted houses in Earl's Court.

Ever since the first net-sales certificate was invented all newspapers and periodicals have been trying to convince (1) their advertisers and (2) themselves

that they are the favourite reading matter of those kings and queens of the modern world and the marketing surveys—the "A.B.s." This is not always very easy. The trouble is that there are not enough "A.B.s" to go round. Only 4,100,000 in the whole country, and more of them women than men, rather oddly. The lower orders of humanity, the "Cs" and the "D.E.s," on the other hand, muster between them at not far short of 33,000,000.

Prestige-wise, as our American semi-cousins say, even more important than A.B.s are Top People. Not all A.B.s are Top People. Nor, what with death duties, increasing competition in the ancient homes trade, and the financial decline in some of the



professions—are all Top People A.B.s. But Top People are even fewer than A.B.s and more select.

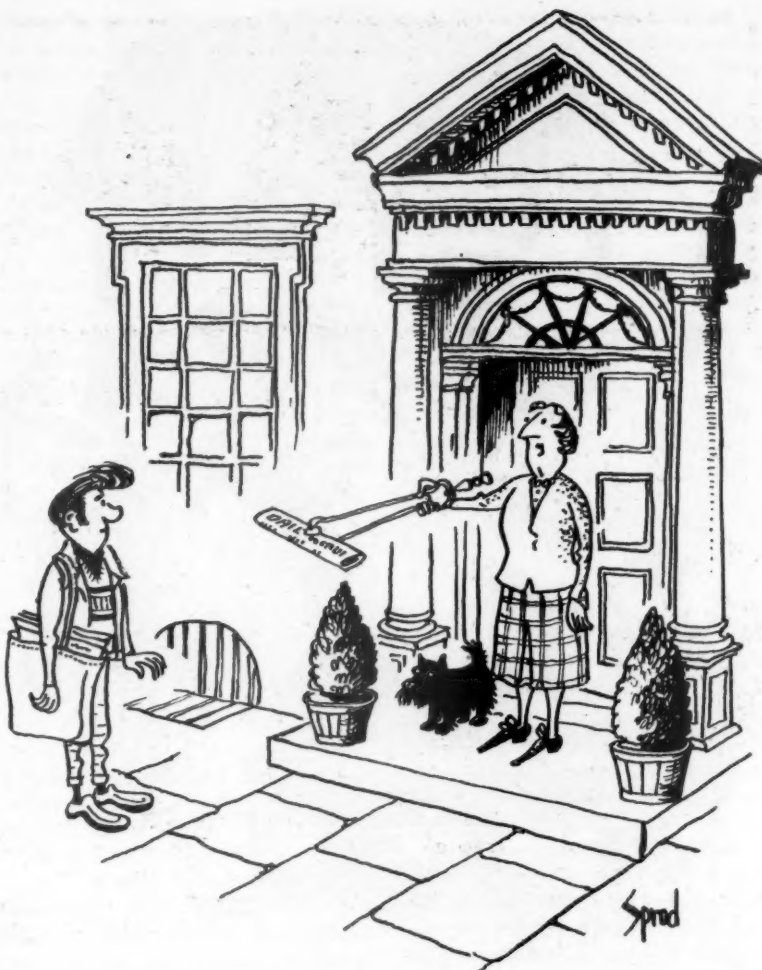
All readers of *The Times* are Top People, although only 69 per cent of them are A.B.s. Connoisseurs of snobism feel, however, that *The Times* was to its own best self untrue when it started advertising the fact. It used to assume that everyone knew.

True Topmanship not only requires that any news known to be of interest to large masses of people shall be ignored—as when *The Times* excluded all mention of Miss Marilyn Monroe from its columns what time the *hoi polloi* were standing on each other's toes in thousands trying to get a glimpse of her moving about London—but the general assumption that none but Top People exist. An excellent example of this latter technique appeared in a *Times* first leader during the war.

It was called "What is France?" and answered its own question by remarking that "For the average Englishman" (note carefully the use of the word average, meaning, according to the *Oxford Dictionary*, "generally prevailing rate or amount, ordinary standard")—"for the average Englishman it means boyhood visits to Fontainebleau and Versailles and Saint Germain, and then golf and bathing on the north coast and Avignon and Arles and Nimes and Les Saintes Maries and Aigues Mortes and Les Baux by moonlight and memories of boyhood reading of Molière and Montaigne and Balzac and Proust and boyish love of the paintings of Bouguereau or Meissonier." This must have caused surprise in Wigan.

Owing to the number of Top People being so small—although capable of course of being swollen discreetly by adding "The Top People of Tomorrow"—it is not worth while the majority of newspapers trying to claim many, although all like to persuade themselves that they command the devoted—not to say fascinated—attention of some. By and large, however, Top People are divided between *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* on weekdays and the *Sunday Times* and the *Observer* on Sundays.

There is, however, a subtle difference about their Topness—or so both newspapers and readers like to think. One indication of this is that although, naturally, *The Times* publishes the Court



"Boy, you delivered the 'Daily Worker' by mistake."

Circular, the *Manchester Guardian* does not. Nor does the *Observer*, although the *Sunday Times* does. The reasons for this you can work out for yourself.

The only other newspaper to do so is the *Daily Telegraph*. Although not strictly a Top People's paper—it has too many readers among other reasons—the *Daily Telegraph* likes to feel that its readers are in spiritual relationship with them. They are Top People's people. The *Daily Telegraph* is a paper that goes well with a bowler hat and a rolled umbrella, indicating that those who carry it under their arms are serious-minded, right-thinking and uncontroversial, likely to be in no danger of (a) getting above themselves, as too obvious reading of *The Times* might

indicate, or (b) turning intellectual, as a preoccupation with the *Manchester Guardian* would suggest. It is an identity card of the brand of ambition heads of departments like to see in their assistants, giving them no cause to lose sleep worrying about their own jobs.

Although not strictly a Top Paper the *Daily Telegraph* is definitely an A.B. paper; 56 per cent of its readers in fact fall into this highly satisfactory category—the same proportion as *The Tatler*.

A.B.s, being numerically larger and less hierarchically stratified than Top People proper, yet in some ways even more satisfactory consumer-research-wise, are naturally much sought after by all newspapers. Even in these egalitarian days, however, they account for only



"Why is it you don't go in for something that would give you a chance to meet people?"

eleven per cent of the adult population, so that they present the mass press with certain problems—as, for example, how to persuade them that a paper which is in fact produced mainly for lower grade citizens, mere C.s and D.E.s, is necessary to their social status.

It is here that the ingrained British habit of snobbery comes in so useful. Although congenital, this snobbery has its subtleties. It is no longer enough merely to treat all D.E.s as potential C.s and all C.s as potential A.B.s. D.E.s also like to be treated as human beings in their own right. It is, indeed, the recognition of this fact that has given the *Daily Mirror* its success. On the other hand the *Daily Express* has achieved nearly as large a circulation by following the exactly opposite policy of

pretending that all geese—or at any rate those geese who read the *Daily Express*—are swans.

There are thus two ways of approaching the problem.

One is to produce a newspaper designed to attract A.B.s by giving the general impression that everyone who reads it belongs to society—well, café society anyway. In such case, the English state of mind being what it is, millions of suburban housewives and their husbands will then also have to read it in order to keep up with the Joneses by knowing what Sir Jones and Lady Jones and their daughter, who in these days models fashions of course, and their son, who naturally plays a trumpet in a jazz band, are up to.

The other method is to be a tribune

of the People. This not only wins the approval of the People themselves but also brings in a certain number of A.B.s and even a few actual Top People, partly for reasons of inverted snobbery to show how democratic they are and partly as an act of self-preservation to find out what the masses are getting up to.

Both methods call for a certain amount of finesse.

For success in the first, for example, it is not enough to know what is U; you must also know what is D—meaning what is done as of this moment—and even more what is N.D. There is nothing so damaging to a paper's reputation as for it not to know which bad manners are good at any moment and which good bad, except perhaps for it not to realize which types of people are news and which are not.

Debutantes, fortunately, are always news. So much so indeed that when Mr. Tommy Steele's manager wanted to put him on the map he had only—as he has recently disclosed—to hire a number of out-of-work actresses to pretend they were debutantes with a passion for Tommy for all the newspapers to become convinced overnight that Mr. Steele was a genius.

Apart from debutantes, however, society is a hit-and-miss business with a floating population. Newspapers are compelled, therefore, to hire teams of gossip writers to see which way the currents are moving. Their lives tend to be nasty, brutish and short, but remunerative while they last. Those most suited to the nervous strain and long hours are often found to be young men recently down from Oxford or Cambridge with novels nobody will publish. A chip on the shoulder is valuable to a successful gossip-writer, but it is even more essential to know whom it is safe to be rude to and when.

The successful paper must also include one or two slightly esoteric features which most of its readers do not understand—at any rate at first—but which provide the right people with an excuse for reading the paper and a subject for coterie conversation. Beachcomber and Osbert Lancaster have done this for the *Daily Express*—for the *Express* has a talent others lack for turning brilliance to its own account.

Some strip cartoons are also valuable: Flook in the *Daily Mail*, for instance.

Peanuts in the *Daily Sketch* is also coming along strongly, its value being that it provides the right people with an excuse for taking a paper they would otherwise not like to admit having in the house. Jane used to do the same for the *Mirror*. However, it is now obligatory to praise the *Mirror* anyway, in order to show that you understand all about mass communication, are not impressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other Establishment figures, and like drinking beer in public bars—are, in fact, definitely D.

This is the ultimate triumph of the second approach.

Items about the Royal Family are of course obligatory for all papers. The degree of sophistication, however, varies. Few who pride themselves on their A.B.-ism would regard the *Daily*

Herald's recent Christmas competition as fitting quite the right note: "Just think of it—Prince Charles and Princess Anne reading—and *treasuring*—a Christmas card from you. Well, you need dream no longer. The *Daily Herald* can at last offer you that thrill, that exclusive pleasure." However, only 2 per cent of the *Herald's* readers are A.B.s anyway. And Mr. George Lansbury has been dead a long time.

In the daily press the frontiers of snobism are constantly moving. In the magazine, especially the woman's magazine, field they remain more stable. If you buy *Marilyn*, *Mirabelle* or *Valentine* you are almost certainly working class. If *Woman* or *Woman's Own*, middle class with aspirations to higher living on a "contemporary" level of decoration. If *Vogue*, *The Queen*

or *The Tatler*, upper middle class. That is if you actually buy them and don't simply read them at the hairdresser's.

No interest in general ideas commonly stains the integrity of any of the three groups. However, even here there are signs of changes to come. *The Queen* has lately been putting on circulation by assuming that sophisticated women should be intelligent about public affairs as well as well-dressed, that conversation is as important as cosmetics. This revolution may change more than the glossy magazine belt. It may even add some new paragraphs to the book of snobs.

Other writers in this series will be:

STEPHEN POTTER
GEORGE SCHWARTZ

No Reply from Bournemouth

By H. F. ELLIS

IT must be weeks now since I sent my telegram to the Bournemouth East (and Christchurch) Conservative Association.

DON'T DO ANYTHING HASTY STOP CONSIDER MYSELF IDEAL CANDIDATE WHO AT AGE FIFTY-ONE CAN NO LONGER HOPE TO BE DESCRIBED AS QUOTE COMPARATIVELY YOUNG MAN CLOSE QUOTES EXCEPT IN POLITICS STOP WAS BOTH PRO AND ANTI SUEZ AND FAVOUR FLOGGING UNLESS IT BRUTALIZES IN WHICH CASE SUBSTITUTE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT PROVIDED NOT CARRIED OUT DURING LIFETIME OF OFFENDER STOP VERY FOND OF RETIRED MILITARY MEN OLD LADIES HYDROS WHIST PINE TREES ETC STOP STRONG LOCAL CONNECTIONS STOP LETTER FOLLOWS

The fact that this message was addressed in error to Bournemouth West, where it is believed to have annoyed the stationmaster and delayed a fish train, is neither here nor there. The letter that followed should have made everything clear.

SIRS [I wrote].—What you want down there is a man who has Bournemouth in his blood. Do you realize that I knew your constituency in the days when you could stay on the pier all day for twopence and Knickerbocker Glories at the

old Westover cost less than a shilling with real cream on top? No wonder you don't see eye to eye with this young Nicolson who, I see, "has since 1952 identified himself with every activity in the town." Since 1952! Why, I was playing Rugby football for Bournemouth in the late 'twenties and would have scored a try against Barnstaple (there and back by coach in the day, mind) but for an unlucky slip. Can Mr. Nicolson say the same? Years before that I used to sit up there at Dean Park trying to make a bottle of ginger beer last right through an innings by Philip Mead, and I don't remember seeing Mr. Nicolson or Major Friend in the shilling seats—or Messrs. Rutland, Wareham and Austen Brooks for that matter. Of course, I've lost touch a bit this last quarter of a century, but it's the formative years that count. Once a Bournemouth man always a Bournemouth man! To take a simple instance, I can still reel off all the stations from Southampton West (as it then was) to Bournemouth Central, not forgetting Beaulieu Road which always trips up the parvenu. Dear me! Do they still sing out "Sway! Sway!" with a sort of dying fall at that ridiculous station where nobody ever gets out?

(Sway must come under New Forest, I realize that, but one should have wider interests beyond the bounds of one's own constituency, don't you think?)

As to my political views, I am a firm admirer of Mr. Baldwin, who did so much for Mary Webb. But I am no confirmed yes-man, and will readily vote "No" when told. Why not put me on your short list and arrange an interview? I suggest Pokedown as a meeting place, if there is still a station there. It must be about in the centre of your constituency, and would make the good people of Christchurch feel they were not forgotten. (One used to be able to get cream teas there, by the way—at Christchurch, I mean; one-and-six and eat till you burst, at a little place near



the Priory. I could talk to the electors about that and make them feel they were in safe hands.)

Yours faithfully,

Not knowing that this letter had been sent to Southend by my agent in the belief that I wished to intervene in a by-election, I wrote again to Bournemouth East a few days later, in rather stronger terms.

SIRS,—Now look what you've done. If you had taken advantage of my offer immediately, instead of humming and hawing over it as I have no doubt you have been doing—breaking off the discussion every few minutes, as like as not, to tell each other about your operations—you might never have had Mr. Randolph Churchill in your hair. I tell you frankly that if he runs as a Conservative candidate, with or without your backing, I shall enter the lists as an Independent Abstainer. My belief is that half your electors are so fed up with the whole ridiculous business that they would just as soon not be represented at all, and might well vote for me as the next best thing. Hampshire

people don't like to be made to look silly, let me tell you—and I speak as one who appeared as an elf at a pageant at Highcliffe Castle, dressed in green tights, while some of you were still young enough to wear plus-fours.

I do not wish to say a word against Mr. Churchill, who has many gifts and distributes them freely, or at any rate widely. But a man who, if elected, would (in his own words) "try to think things out for himself within the wide ambit of Tory principles" is not the man for Bournemouth. What a pity it all is! Take that phrase "within the wide ambit, etc." There speaks the politician. Mr. Macmillan himself could hardly better it. But the brutal declaration of an intention to think things out for himself reveals the hairy heel of the individualist. Is Bournemouth to be represented by this stormy petrel, who would be utterly out of place in your Winter Gardens (the place still exists, I hope) and has probably never played a game of Patience in his life?

In all the circumstances, the best plan now seems to be to split the Conservative vote into as many pieces as

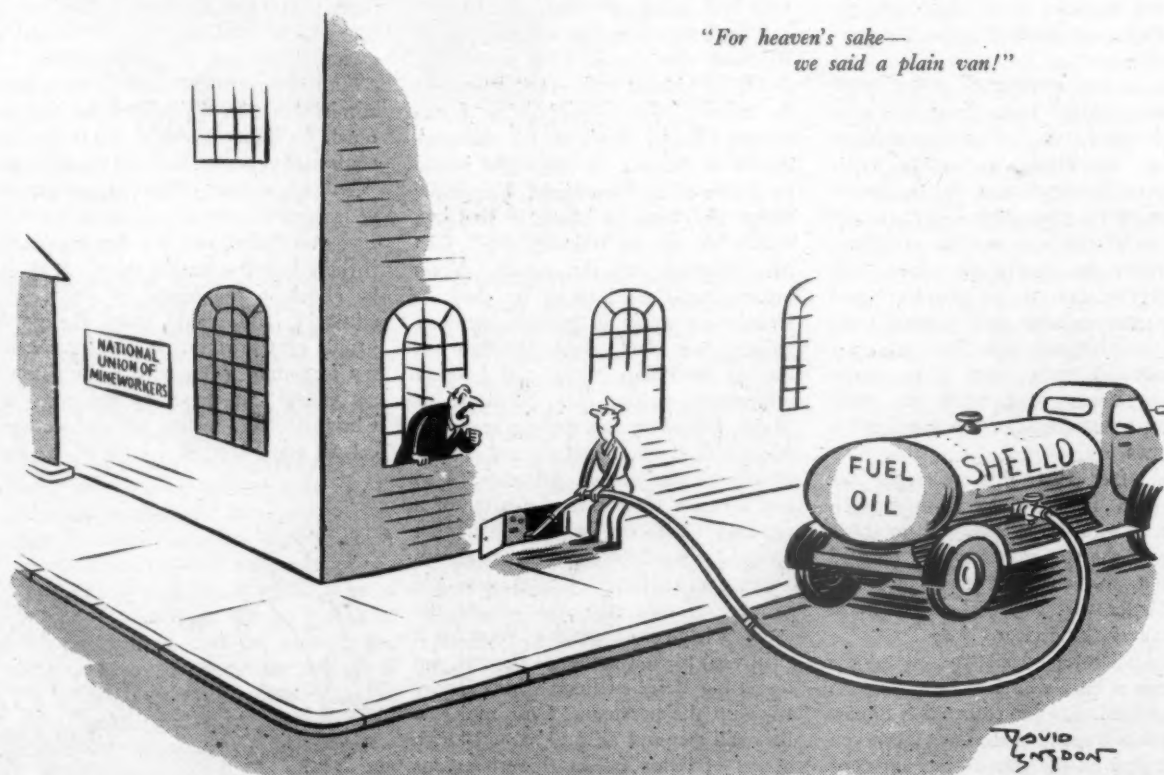
possible, thus ensuring that Mr. Rutland gets in for Labour on a minority vote. Bournemouth would not then be responsible in any true sense for its representative, and could continue to sleep at ease during parliamentary divisions. I will gladly help to achieve this aim, in gratitude for many happy days on the Promenade (Esplanade? Front? One's memory grows rusty), but you must pay the deposit.

Yours, etc.,

Later (by wire):

IF NO REPLY TO MY LAST LETTER RECEIVED WITHIN THREE DAYS SHALL HAVE NO OPTION BUT TO ASSUME IT WAS SENT IN ERROR TO EVENING STANDARD STOP NOW THAT YOU HAVE GOT HAILSHAM DOWN THERE ASK NOT FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS STOP WHAT ON EARTH CAN CHELTHENHAM AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS BE THINKING OF YOU EXCLAMATION MARK FOR QUOTE PROMENADE CLOSE QUOTES READ QUOTE UNDER CLIFF DRIVE CLOSE QUOTES AND OBLIGE

If that doesn't stir them up I see nothing for it but to withdraw my offer and ask Colonel Wintle to intervene.



"For heaven's sake—
we said a plain van!"



"Now, sir—which one do you say he's defaced?"

A Ministry of Education pamphlet on the teaching of mathematics recommends that an attempt should be made "to fit the mathematics to the pupil." The following examples come from one such attempt, B. A. YOUNG's forthcoming—

Current Arithmetic

1. Six men contract to build a wall in twelve days. When the wall is half-finished two men are laid off. How long will it take the remainder to complete the wall?

2. A cinema contains front stalls at 1s. 6d., centre stalls at 2s. 6d., and back stalls at 3s. 6d. If four boys sit in the front stalls, six in the centre stalls and three in the back stalls, how much will they have spent altogether?

3. A boy is sentenced to two years in a Borstal Institution, with the promise of remission of one quarter of his time for good behaviour. At the end of one year he hits one of the staff with an axe, and loses all remission up to that date. How much longer will he serve?

4. A man leaves Knightsbridge Station in a bus at 7 p.m. to go to

Piccadilly Circus. At the same time his girl friend leaves Tottenham Court Road Station in a taxi for the same destination. Given that (i) a bus is capable of averaging 12 m.p.h., (ii) a taxi is capable of averaging 18 m.p.h., and (iii) the distance from Knightsbridge Station to Tottenham Court Road Station is $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, how far apart will they be at five minutes past seven?

5. An actress appearing in a serial on commercial television has a clause written into her contract guaranteeing that she will be on the screen for a minimum of 75 per cent of the duration of each instalment. If the serial runs in six half-hour parts, what is the least amount of time for which the actress will be visible?

6. An intercontinental ballistic missile is fired from Cape Canaveral at a rocket site at Khrushchevo, distant 5,678 miles, at 10.36 p.m. G.M.T., on January 27, 1984. A missile is fired from Khrushchevo at Cape Canaveral at 10.38 p.m. G.M.T., on the same day. If the mean estimated velocity of the Cape Canaveral missile is '92 that of the Khrushchevo missile, at what point will the two missiles meet?

ANSWERS

1. 51 days. The remaining four went on strike for six weeks in protest against the sackings. 2. 19s. 6d., of course. 3. He will abscond the next day. 4. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. 5. 1hr. 52 min. 30 sec. (You forgot the commercials.) 6. At Cape Canaveral.

Pygmalion in Mayfair

By LORD KINROSS

Notes on the training of My Fair Ladies

WHILE the rain rains away in the plains in Spain, Pygmalion to-day aids maids to make the grade in Mayfair. Not from Drury Lane but from Dagenham, from Ilford, from Croydon, from Cheam; not from the flower pitch but from the factory, the shoeshop, the telephone switchboard, Liza Doolittles no longer, but Jennifers and Hazels and Beryls, they come to Curzon Street to a place where they may be trained to become the ladies of the age.

Their Pygmalion is a Mr. John Douglas, his establishment is a School for Personal Improvement and Grooming, and the gates which he opens to these Lizas of to-day are those of the reception lobby, the cocktail lounge, the fashion showroom, the television screen—that stage of to-day that's all a world, in which mere men and women all aspire to be players.

But with the march of progress Professor Higgins has changed his sex. Mr. Douglas delegates his task of

Improvement to a regiment of female Pygmalsions, redoubtable ladies well-groomed and well-trained in Charm. A Mother highly Superior initiates the aspirants, with proper severity, into the mysteries of Speech.

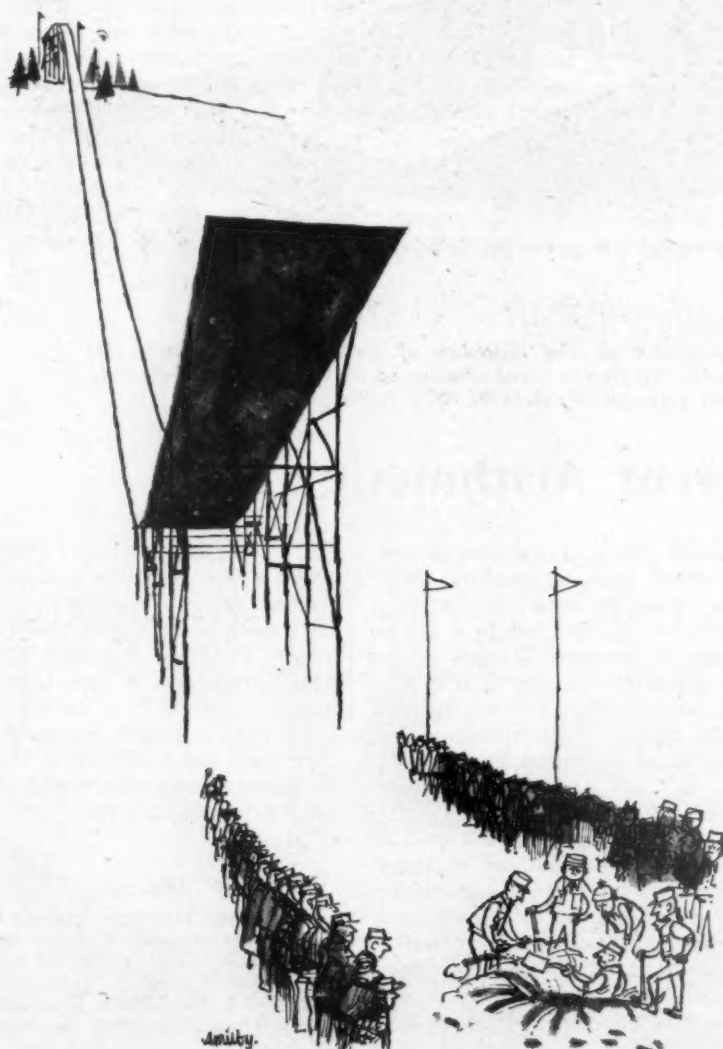
As, in a variety of soft suburban dialects—each doubtless identifiable to Higgins—they recite their responses, she commands them “Bang on the consonants more! Open your mouths! Use your lips, tongue, jaw, use everything!” One novice is too nasal, another too careful, another slips up terribly on her *l* sounds. Not an *h*, such is evolution, can be heard to drop: Enry Iggins is no more. But there is much reprehensible dropping of the *gs* on the *-ings*—a habit fashionable enough at Ascot in the Doolittle days.

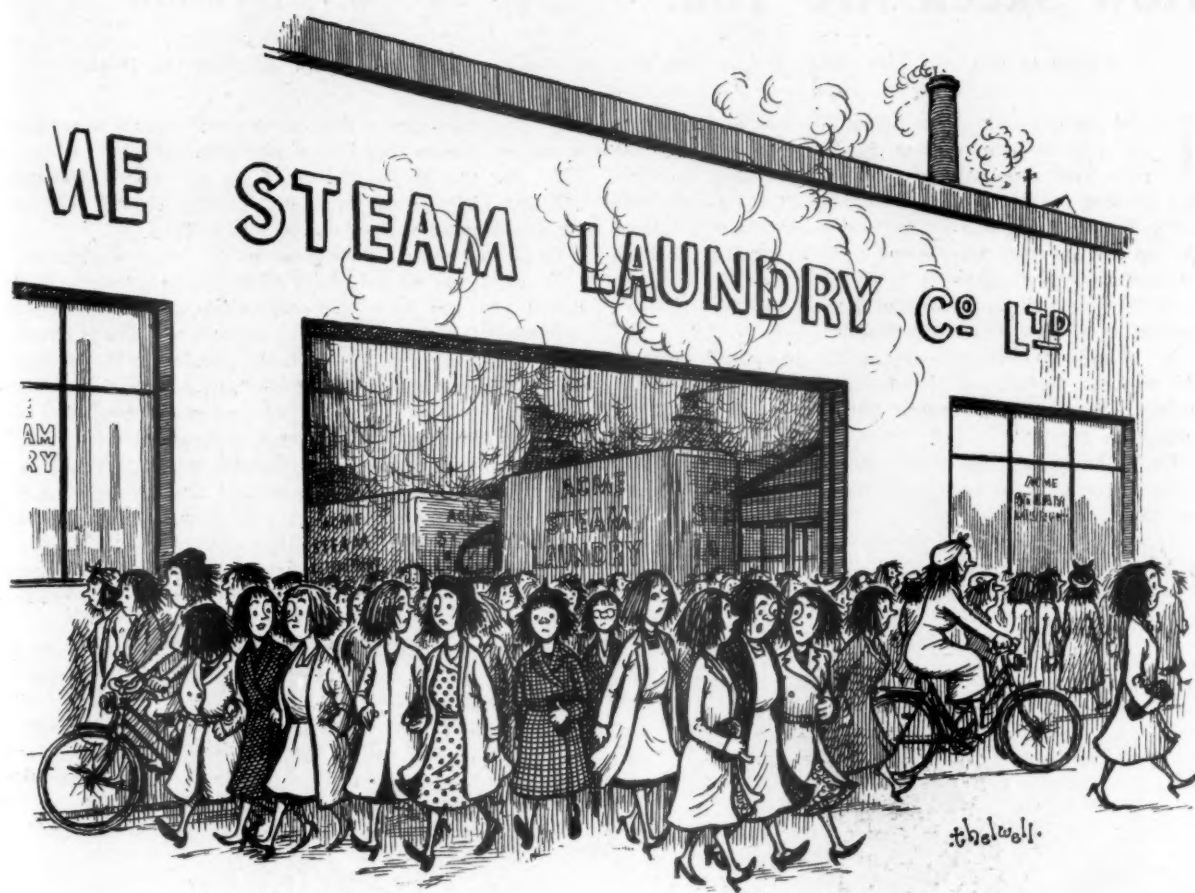
“*Cru-elty*, not *croolty*,” the lady raps out. “*Proce-dure*, not *proce-jure*. Make it rounder—*no-ow*, not *na-ow* . . . You're slurring it . . . Take your hand away from your mouth . . . Your breath's coming out before your voice . . .”

Then, that their voices may grow used to the natural means of communication, in this age of enlightenment, between man and man, each is instructed to speak into a tape recorder, impersonating a commentator of the B.B.C. as she describes, in succession, a Fashion Show, a Baby Show, the Launching of a Liner by the Queen, a Ballroom Dancing Contest.

The shy, breathless voices stammer out: “Good evening, every-buddy—every-body. This is Mr. Bra-own's—Mr. Bro-own's autumn c'lexion. His fai-mous model, in a royal blue coat, with matching accessories, is na-ow walking up the ramp . . . A chubby little bai-by has been brought up to the judges' ti-ble . . . Her Majesty is looking simply splendid in a blue velvet go-own with a little velvet hat. The great loi-ner begins slai-ding da-own into the Ocean. . . The girls look so naice and fluffy in their paille blues and pinks. The men are so handsome in their tuxedos . . .” The records are played back, each girl listening to herself in rapturous astonishment, visions forming in their minds of the great day when they will all have learnt to speak just like everybody else.

Not merely to speak. For the aspirant to Fair Ladyship must learn also to sit, to stand, to walk, to eat, to





drink, to pick up things, to hold them, to light cigarettes—just like everybody else. Otherwise, as Mr. Douglas curdles the blood by threatening “You might just as well be back in the caves, gnawing bones.”

The female Pygmalions initiate them into the ladylike secrets of how to come in at a door (eyes level, chin up, with a pause to sum up the whole room) and how to go out of one (backwards, leaving a pleasant experience behind). They reveal that each fair lady must sit a little differently, according to the type of her leg and her ankle, and, having once learnt, she must *always* sit in this way, whether in bus or in car or in kitchen, placing her hands always in one of three positions and her handbag always in the same one (on the lap, not the floor).

They teach that walking must be done

by putting one foot in front of the other and by leaning backwards, but not too far. They teach them to hold an umbrella, a handbag, a pair of gloves, a cocktail glass, a lighted cigarette—and at the same time to shake hands with a gentleman, the eyes full upon him. They teach them to walk downstairs, carrying all this, and perhaps also a dog, and balancing a corset-box on the head. They give them helpful chats on Personal Hygiene, Wining and Dining Out, Personal Colour Analysis, Appreciation of Furniture, Handwriting in Keeping with a Chic Appearance, Understanding a Ballet. They allow them the envied privilege of Meeting a Columnist.

Then the girls trip upstairs to play happily with their hair and their faces in a room full of mirrors. It is these attributes above all that will help them

to shine, not perhaps, like Professor Higgins's pupils, as Kings' Consorts or supposed princesses at ambassadorial garden-parties, but as receptionists, air hostesses, television announcers and, on the topmost rung, models—those higher vocations undreamt of by Miss Eliza Doolittle or even Mr. George Bernard Shaw.

☆

“The Duke of Norfolk . . . has earned a new honour. He has been appointed an admiral—of the Sussex Yacht Club . . . The position is purely honorary—there is not even a uniform—and the duke will have no particular duties to perform . . . Says the club president . . . ‘Of course, he could preside over our regattas if he were present. But I do not really expect him to attend’ . . . The Duke, fifty, is tireless in the performance of public duties . . .”—*Sunday Express*
No wonder.

How Skeen Are You?

By DAPHNE BOUTWOOD

A Quiz to Test your Zest and to find out how keen you really are on Sporting with the Snow this Winter

1 Do you (a) rush off to Lillywhites and jump up and down on wooden bananas, getting your weight on the right foot, dropping the shoulders, swinging the arms and bending the knees; and do you devote at least an hour every day to running smartly up the down escalator and down the up one on your way to work, to strengthen the back tendons of feet and calves?

Or (b) simply run for your bus as usual and say you don't believe in crippling yourself before you go?

2. Are you (a) kitting yourself up with superlastik snoprufe ski trousers, high-ankled handstitched boots with double lacings, Everest-tested anorak and three-way non-steam collapsible goggles?

Or (b) borrowing half your stuff, including an old army camouflage cape, and trusting to luck you can hire the rest out there?

3. Do you (a) make a habit of reading the snow reports aloud at breakfast, slapping your thigh and crying "Thirty-one feet in Obergürgl, a splendid sign!" and "What we want is a really Cold Spell"?

Or (b) mutter glumly that you doubt if there'll be anything to ski on. Unless they import pine needles?

4. Are you (a) insured up to the last eyelash, and quite undismayed by having to state in writing whether you want Return of Ashes or Body in Case of Demise?

Or (b) not insured, through either fatalism or negligence?

5. Have you (a) and fifteen others like you rented a chalet where you can have tremendous fun cooking your own apfelstrudel, save money on tips, and take out piles of scrumptious egg sandwiches for whole-day picnics on the slopes?

Or (b) joined one of those mixed parties, bound for Untergloppenheim of all places, which you are moodily sure will turn out to be twenty-five women and two men?

6. Are you (a) varnishing your skis, plaiting Turks'-heads on the leather of your ski sticks, and hanging the lot across the corner of the sitting-room with notices saying "Do not Breathe Here" and "Touch at your Peril"?

Or (b) trying to remember if you left your skis behind in Austria, hid them in the attic, or lent them to your brother-in-law?

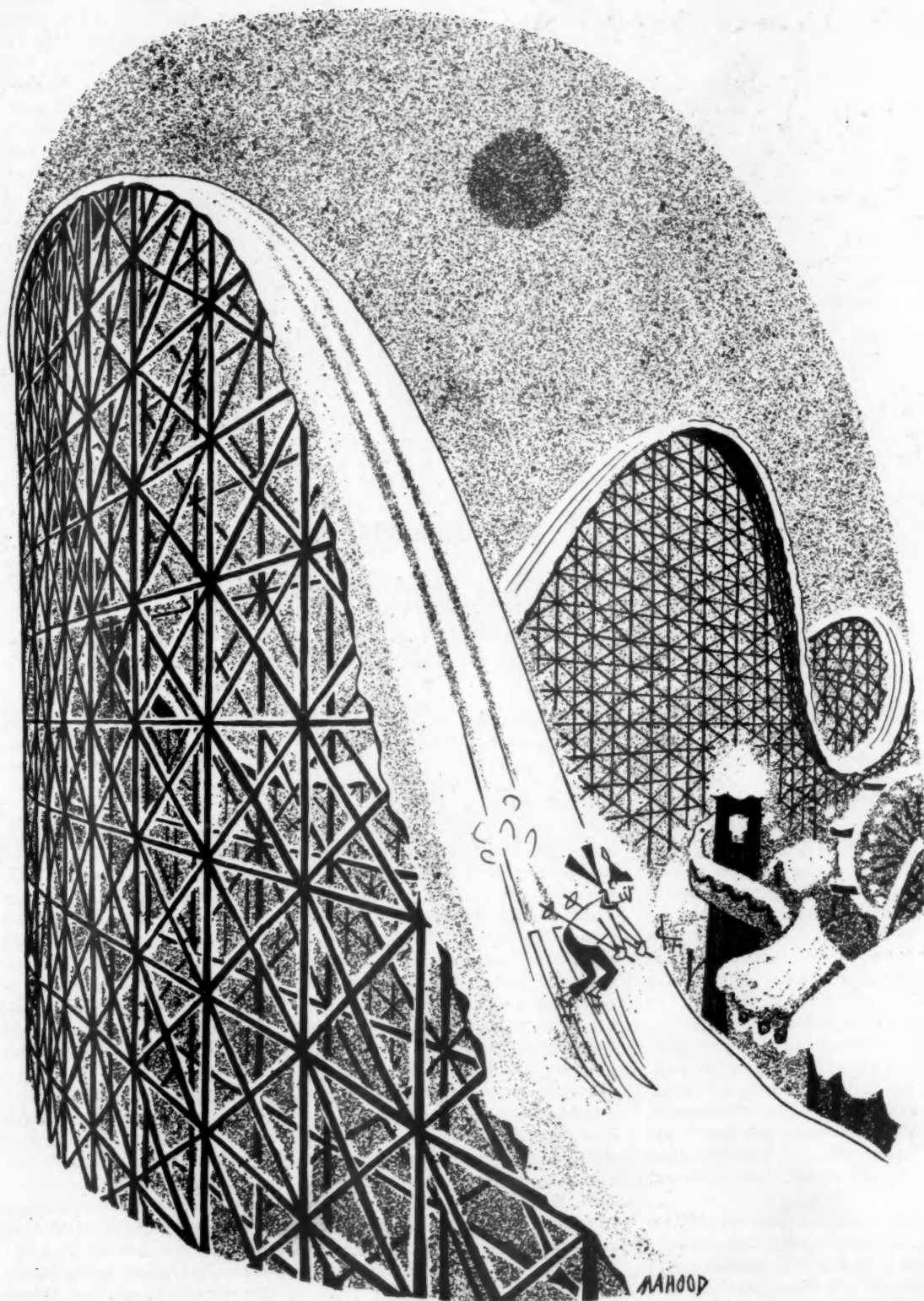
7. Do you spend all leisure moments (a) mugging up the works of Arnold Lunn (if male) or knitting cosy woollen ear-bands (if female)?

Or (b) poring over travel brochures for cruises to Madeira, yachting holidays on the Dalmatian coast, coach tours of the Black Forest or cultural jaunts to Venice, Florence, Rome, etc?

Now check your replies against our Keen-Skee Graph.



More (a)s than (b)s	Your infectious enthusiasm will see you through pretty well everything except twisting your ankle as you step out of the train. Have a Care, and Ski Heil!
More (b)s than (a)s	Room for more zip and zing, but don't worry; once out there among the glorious snow-capped peaks and peak-capped snowmaidens you will lose yourself in the sheer thrill of the King of Sports. Take the trouble to obtain passport, ticket and travellers' cheques first, though.
All (a)s	You have obviously never skied before, yet you see yourself as a natural champion. Consider carefully before you court disillusion, danger or death.
All (b)s	You have been ski-ing every year now since that pre-war school party to the Swiss Alps. Why not try skin-diving or fly-fishing for a change?





Revelations of a Fashion Spy

The strict security measures adopted by the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne to ensure that no word or hint of the 1959 Spring and Summer Collections leaks out before the appointed date has led as usual to a tense atmosphere in the French capital, as this progress report from an English fashion correspondent to her editor will show.

DEAR LORNA,—I have established a base in an upper apartment in the Rue des Trois Ciseaux. From here, with the aid of a pair of binoculars, I can see right into the buttonhole department of the House of Delmair, and I must tell you first of all that masked men are working there day and night, making buttonholes smaller. I'm not sure yet whether this is a revolutionary trend, or simply a cover for even more sinister goings-on in the back room, but I do know that they've just taken delivery of an unusually large roll of blue serge.

This report comes to you by pigeon. To-morrow I will start using the code, and I must ask you to make an amendment to the master copy. "General de Gaulle" means "accordion pleat," and not "bolero skirt." This has been agreed by all correspondents in the spy ring.

I have made contact with Nellie Ruche of *Teen Fashions*, who managed to get into Schiaparilla disguised as a traveller in petersham and make a crayon sketch of three tulle jabots and

a directoire skirt in water-repellent chintz before they tumbled to her and reported her to the Chambre Syndicale for a breach of Interpress Protocol. Directoire skirts and tulle jabots may therefore be ruled out, and the Schiaparilla organization is feverishly retooling for what they think is going to be a surprise. It won't be. Nellie and I, together with Herbert Rackrent of *Flounce* (I wish he'd do something about those spots), waylaid one of their apprentice hemstitchers in a dark alley near the Rue de la Paix and found in her left sabot a diagram of a detachable ballerina-length cocktail gown with gores of a contrasting shade, a smudged photo of three magyar sleeves with pseudo-Baroque appliqué motif, and a lightweight Trilby hat decorated with slingshot. We then threatened to thump her ailing mother unless she came clean with the chosen colour for spring. My dear, if I heard her correctly it is Parbleu, which I take to be a kind of indigo. That should cause some excitement in Streatham.

My expense account (which I enclose)

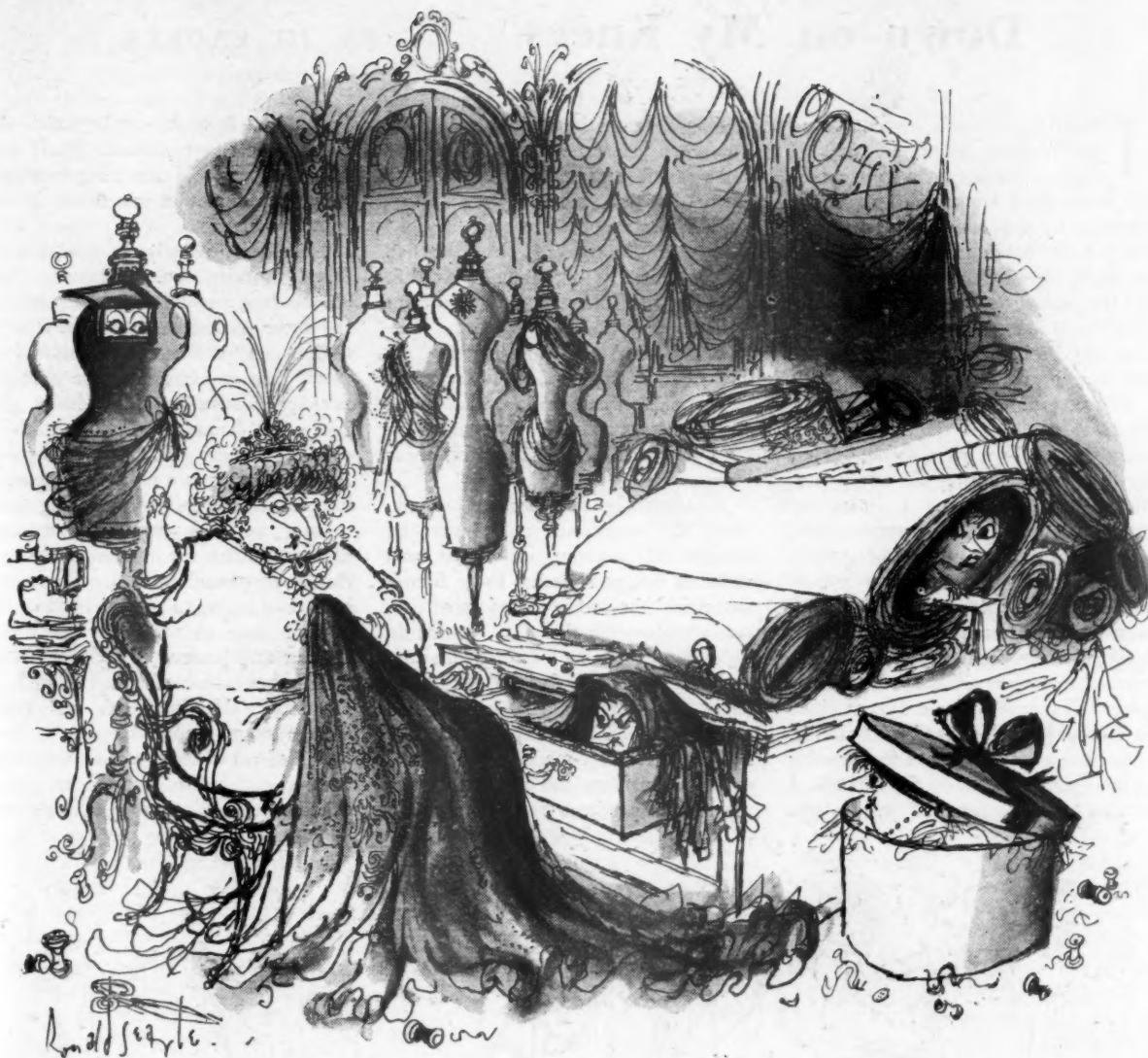
includes an item of 1200 francs (heavy) for incidentals. This was the sum I had to pay that cursed Magda Harrison of the *Daily News* for a copy of a blueprint which blew out of a window of the House of Dion while she was waiting for it to get dark so that she could unscrew the front door and nip in for a gander at the hemlines. She swore this blueprint was of an informal afternoon two-piece with inverted cuffs, the skirt cut on the bias with V-shaped panels and a storm-proof knee-length taffeta lining, but it looks to me like a redecoration plan for the first-floor Powder Room. Will you check, please?

As you know, the Délégué Général of the Chambre has ruled that Pre-Collection interviews with couturiers must disclose only indefinite information. I pumped the unspeakable Tutu

for ten minutes in a dreary bistro next door to his sweat-shop, and managed to get this, which might do for the Gossip Column:

Dapper Monsieur Tutu, uncrowned king of Paris Haute-Couture, insisted on joining me for supper last night in the fashionable Bal-Nu night-spot in the heart of Montmartre. As we watched the floor-show he told me about the dazzling surprises he has in store for us when his collection opens on February 26. Some of his day-coats, he whispered, sipping pink champagne, will have buttons. The trapeze-line is out. Women will wear shoes for evening. Skirt lengths will definitely vary, and hands will be uncovered unless gloves are worn. Tutu, suave and book-loving, is unmarried.

I am sending by separate pigeon a parcel containing one of Castorolli's Boutique creations which I stole from the back of his car during a traffic jam at the Arc de Triomphe. It was being worn at the time by Enid, Castorolli's



top model. I am holding her, bound and gagged, in the sitting-room of my apartment, wrapped in a sheet. She swears so far that she doesn't know whether plastic handbags are to be carried this year or not, but another day without food or drink should make her talk.

Maisie Schumeister of *Weekly Cleavage* is livid because the *Chambre* says *Cleavage* isn't a magazine of prestige as laid down in Haute Couture Rules of Procedure and has been struck off the official Press List. They have impounded both her Permit and her Couture Press Card, and the Press

Couture Relations Attaché has been given instructions to eject her from all official cocktail parties, soirées or *lête-à-lêtes*. In retaliation, she has gone through a form of marriage with the night-watchman at Galleries Bon Ton, and to-morrow he is to smuggle her into the building, where she proposes to stay hidden, passing out information to me and Charlie Frill of *Lady's Week* by means of smoke signals. We have worked out a foolproof code, from which I give sample extracts:

2 white puffs
2 black puffs
1 white, 1 black

Beaded handbags are in.
Beaded handbags are out.
Above the knee.

159

2 white, 2 black	Below the knee.
3 white puffs	Tacking stitches are to be left in.
3 black puffs	Waistline under armpits.
1 white puff	No accessories this year.
2 white, 1 black	Are you receiving me?
4 black	No change.

So you see, one way or another I hope to be able to keep you up to date with developments.

Yours ever,

ALEXIS

P.S.—While I have been writing this, some sneak has crept in and pinched the handful of gussets I borrowed from Balanchose Frères. Fortunately I photographed them. They're staggering.

Down on My Knees

By JO PACKER

"I WARN you, it's murder," said the cinema manager when I applied for demotion from usherette to cleaner. He should have added "murder by matchsticks." They were everywhere; behind the drapes, among the seats, littering the W.C.s, and they had the ability to dig themselves into floor cracks like crabs into sand. Unless you had probing, surgeon-like fingers you were no match for a match.

Above ground, the most tiresome things to sweep were the lids from ice-cream tubs. They were so flat. They lay flatly there, letting me sweep over them again and again. I turned my brush over and tried the wooden side, and, if that didn't work, I jabbed them hard using the brush pickaxe fashion. Finally, getting wilder and wilder, I fell on them with hands outstretched. As I ripped them from the carpet I discovered they were either stuck there by a layer of congealed ice-cream or glued by a repulsive half-sucked fruit pastille.

Toffees were great ones for cleaving to the floor and sending down roots. I remember one caramel which was

abiding beneath the middle seat, front row, when I started working as a cleaner and was still a permanent fixture there when I left three months later.

Work was supposed to begin at eight o'clock in the morning, but the five other cleaners were keen and arrived at a quarter to. They came by bus from distant corners of Birmingham. They all had large families and had to "get Ted off," so the phrase "I was up at half-past five this morning, what about you?" became a cliché. By comparison my own seven o'clock rising was sheer dissipation.

We started by sweeping the balcony. Here the wondrous thing was the number of uneaten ice-creams and undrunk orange squashes to be found. Invariably they were placed most precisely underneath the seat. It was an expensive cinema so I deduced that the patrons who paid five-and-six for a circle seat came to the pictures only occasionally. For many moons they had dined off chef-made ice-cream and cocktail squashes, and in consequence the cinema products came as a shock.

I liked the discreet way in which the unpalatable was banished. There was never any sign of the temperamental slinging-around that one found in the front stalls.

Chocolates, usually in boxes, were found upstairs, too. When we had shared these out we trooped downstairs for more varied rubble. Sweets in Cellophane packets, jam sandwiches, penny cobs and boxes of tarts were the principal foodstuffs. Ale, whisky, gin, beer and lemonade bottles told of drinking habits. This was a mystery, for in all my years as a cinemagoer I have never seen anyone drinking from a bottle, yet here was proof that many did so. During my last few weeks as a cleaner new trends were in evidence, for beer cans began to replace bottles.

There was an unwritten law about flotsam and jetsam. Earrings, gloves and umbrellas were handed in to Lost Property. Handkerchiefs and small change were finders-keepers. Two books of art studies, which were discovered while I was there, were thumbed through thoroughly with cries



of disgust before being appropriated by the doormen.

The cleaners were good, respectable women. When, after sweeping, we all sat down for a cup of tea, they began to decry the films shown in the cinema. "It's very rarely I use my free pass," declared one; "the pictures aren't fit to see." "They're all on one subject," said another, "that's why I've stopped my kiddies from coming. It broadens their minds too much."

They disapproved of the doormen, too. These three characters did various and obscure jobs around the outside of the cinema during the morning hours, and when tea was mashed they came rushing in to head the queue. This released a flood of sarcastic comment from my fellow cleaners, and always led into an argument about which sex worked the harder.

"Garn," said fox-faced Wilbur to us women, "you don't know what work it!" "'Course they don't," backed up Blockhead Bill, "they just scratch around." By the time the young and loping Larry had added "They cackle like a lot of hens—haven't you heard them?" things were in a fine ferment in spite of the low standard of riposte. For we women knew how many calories made five, and we maintained that the only thing the men knew was how long to lean on an old coke-shovel before it gave way.

Tea-break over, we split up to do six separate jobs—foyer, stairs, lavatories, front steps, brasses and mopping up between seats. We changed jobs every week so that no one would get bored. This also ensured—as the last two jobs could be done standing—that we had thick knees only four weeks out of six.

Scrubbing the foyer played on my imagination as I moved over the chequered floor, until I felt I was a draught on a draughtboard. When I projected myself too intensely into the world under my knees I found myself moving suddenly from square to square. At work on the rubber and lino stairs, equipped with lead cleaning paste and a bucket of water, my imagination always lingered on the revenge I would take on the milkman. Daily he came clumping up just when I had made the first flight spotless. He carried a crate of milk to the cinema café above, and wore heavily-treaded gum boots whatever the weather. "I know what you're



"Frostbite."

thinking!" he said jovially every day as he passed.

The lavatories were the most hygienic in the city, and never more so than the night on which the teddy-boys ripped out some of the piping in the downstairs Gents. No one noticed it, so the water flowed till dawn. Liz, who was on lavatories that week, looked on the bright side by remarking that the floor was very clean, all the litter having been washed away.

My favourite scrubbing job was "front steps," because of the variety of people passing the cinema. Many stopped to talk or to ask about the film. One old lady made a point of getting the scrubber's opinion every week of the current show. When I was last on "front steps" *The Young Lions* was being shown. "I'm bringing my grandson to see this film this afternoon," she confided. "But tell me—will it frighten him? Do the lions roar very loudly?"

"Brasses" was a black job, and "mopping between seats" a sloshy one, necessitating a change of water every three rows. Once I was given the special task of cleaning the aisle carpets with a reputable detergent, plus a four-inch nail for digging out embedded chewing-gum, but my work was wasted. By the next morning a fresh supply of gum had been well and truly trodden in.

We finished work at eleven. Now and

again we were given a treat by being allowed to sit through a trade show. The other cleaners often remained true to their opinion of films and declined the invitation, but I always stayed. The film came straight from London. Local film critics and Midland worthies, invited by the manager, filed in as we put our cleaning utensils away. A classical record was on the turntable, the lights were elegantly soft.

Sitting among those serious people, listening for good script and watching for unusual camera angles, I was ninety-nine per cent absorbed. But the remaining one per cent was alert. Every time a match was struck I was called back to reality sufficiently to turn around to the striker and to growl under my breath "Put it in the ashtray, mate!"

☆

"What happened to Laurie London? Remember the 13-year-old Stamford Hill prodigy who nearly set the Atlantic on fire with 'He's Got the Whole World in His Hands'? . . . He topped the American Hit Parade, and was hauled off to the States for personal appearances . . . A year ago he had the whole world of entertainment in his diminutive fist . . . Young Laurie did not follow up with another hit, but with merely a succession of near-misses. Having reached the top he still had not learned the trick of staying there . . . Nevertheless, in the London ménage hope runs high . . . He has just recorded one of his own compositions, 'My Mother.' . . ."

Daily Express

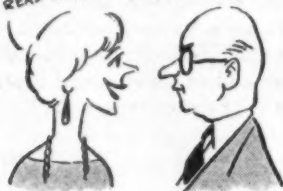
He's learned.

SKI-ING is the one sport, except ping-pong, which women took up from its introduction instead of letting men have all the fun to themselves at first. It was at the beginning of this century that leisured Englishmen introduced Scandinavian ski-ing, as a sport, to Switzerland; and their women-folk went with them. These wives and sisters were entirely womanly. Profiting by having observed the experiments of the first lady bicyclists, they did not wear trousers—that is to say, not visibly.

In 1894 *Punch* had suggested that the type known as the New Woman, who was rebelling against the established patriarchy of Victorian England, should be known as the Revolting Woman. Revolting daughters were demanding to be educated, to play games, to smoke cigarettes, to vote, and to join women's clubs. They were rapidly entering public life, and were bicycling so fast in the company of young men that they left their chaperons far behind. It was these bicyclists who were the most conspicuous of the revolting women: conspicuous in the sense of being seen in checked tweed knickerbockers and Norfolk jackets.

Lady Harberton, that tireless worker

POETRY, YES POETRY IS ONE OF MY GREAT PASSIONS, PROFESSOR. I READ IT INCESSANTLY...



VIRTUALLY NON-STOP. I WENT TO ELIOT'S COCKTAIL PARTY FIVE TIMES



FOR
WOMEN



Shes on Skis

for dress reform whose particular pet project was the divided skirt, gave the knickerbocker suit her blessing. It was a rational costume; but it was not a romantic one and therefore, of course, it did not last. To those whom the comforts of middle-class Victorian life

had endowed with a comfortable *embonpoint* it was particularly unbecoming. Lady ski-ers, forewarned

by these fore-running bipeds, settled for skirts. At the Ski Club of Great Britain there is a photograph of a group of ladies taken in 1902. They are dressed for the day's ski-ing in the same tailored costumes that they would wear for a walk in the country. Their heavy, braided skirts are snow-length, and their figures curve in the fashionable S-bend—an anatomical anomaly achieved by what was called the straight-fronted corset, whose unconquerable bones would be the last to break in a tumble on the slopes. In Ontario at about this time a preacher was declaring the corset to be "incompatible with Christianity"; but it was not considered incompatible with ski-running.

Such costumes, apart from variations of detail, were worn by lady ski-ers for the whole of that first decade. They

were not only influenced by vanity and the views of their menfolk but also by the prudery—call it propriety—of the Swiss. Those few Englishwomen who tried wearing riding-breeches had to run the gauntlet of being spat at, or even stoned, in the villages—extravagant peasant gestures, one would say; but we must remember that it was unusual in that period for ladies on horseback to ride astride. Those who did were called the New Amazons; and even in English villages the matron's hiss was not always unheard as they rode by.

Gradually and circumspectly the more expert ski-ers (such as Miss Maitland who beat all the men competitors in a ski competition at Mürren in 1912) took to wearing breeches under a wrap skirt, which they took off when they reached the higher slopes and carried in their rucksacs. This skirt was designed by Mr. Symonds, a London tailor. The first world war revealed for all to see that women possessed many sturdy qualities hitherto unsuspected, including legs; and Mr. Symonds, after 1918, began designing ski-ing trousers: narrow, tapering, with elastic under the instep. When the Ladies' Ski Club was founded in 1923 he made plus-fours for its members; and in the 1930s long loose trousers plus-twoing at the ankle were the thing. Next came the *vorlages*, copied from the Austrian guides, which

AND I ADORED CHRISTOPHER FRY— ESPECIALLY RING ROUND THE MOON



AND NATURALLY I WALLOWED IN DYLAN AND MILK



Figure with Telephone

ONCE more the call-box that I stood beside
 Contained the Figure. Largish, in a mac,
 It swung, receiver-clamped and glassy-eyed,
 Towards the queue; then swinging slowly back
 Turned to the wall its bulk, its waiting stare.
 (How many minutes had it waited there?)

And then we saw it move its lips about;
 It wasn't waiting, it was *listening*.
 And then, ah, then it took a notebook out
 So as to read great extracts from the thing
 Over the air; though not, of course, before
 It had got back its pencil from the floor . . .

And when at length it sauntered out, it seemed
 Well pleased with how the last half-hour had shaped;
 Perhaps a bit of business nicely schemed,
 The two-fifteen at Lingfield nicely taped
 As only largish men in raincoats can—
 O sisters, need I say it was a *man*? — ANGELA MILNE



"You're handsome when you're angry."

are almost similar to the first trousers Mr. Symonds designed for women. The *vorlages* have held the slopes against all comers ever since.

In the last decade tops have changed, if not bottoms. Whereas it used to be a sign of the inexperienced tyro or the ten-day tourist to wear a coloured sweater or windjammer instead of a black or navy tailored jacket to match the trousers, the brilliant anoraks and parkas have swept away all such sobering inhibitions. Even the most expert ski-ers do not now scorn the scenic value of glowing colours against the surrounding white. The cult of the inconspicuous, the man-made fable that quiet clothes breathe a distinguished expertise, has been exposed as summit snobbery. Those who take their sport seriously need no longer take it soberly.

— ALISON ADBURGHAM

The Memo Slate on the Wall

IT needs a little practice, of course. The first day you will scribble "Grns. Brd. Sgr." early in the morning and come back at two o'clock without a notion what it means. After leafing hopefully through your pocket dictionary you will give it up and go out shopping, only to return without greens, bread or sugar. If you write just "G.B.S." you may start grating banana skins or going to Boston Stump.

But after several days you get the knack of drawing little pictures. A ring, for instance, precedes the initials of the person you must telephone. Thus "OJ" means "telephone Jean" (or Joan, or John, or Jeremy) unless, of course, you have a joint to order from the butcher. Similarly "H" represents the television set, so "HVG" reminds you that a valve

is gone, and who cares if you hoed the vegetable garden anyway?

Be firm about intruders. Nobody else in the house must use your slate, especially people advertising birthday wants (e.g. Peas Potatoes ROLLER SKATES Tea.) But don't let them sting you to an impulsive cleaning of the slate, for with them will disappear that R.T.K., H.W.A., and O.V.P.P.S. which have been tearing you to shreds since dinner-time. Once out of sight these unresolved equations will commingle to the R.A.H., P.K.S., and P.V.O.T.W. which will finally drive you to a sleep-walking orgy in which you will place the slate between the pages of the Complete Works of Bernard Shaw and bury it at the foot of Boston Stump with the telephone directory. — HAZEL TOWNSON

AT THE MOMENT? WHY, I'M
 READING JOHN BETJEMAN, OF COURSE



OTHERS, PROFESSOR? ARE THERE
 ANY OTHERS?



WELL, I MEAN THEY CAN'T BE
 ALL THAT GOOD, CAN THEY, IF
 WE'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF THEM?



Hollywood

Toby Competitions

No. 53—Travellers' Tales

COMPETITORS are invited to submit an anecdote of travel that throws light upon national characteristics, British or foreign. Limit one hundred and fifty words.

A prize consisting of a framed *Punch* original, to be selected from all available drawings, is offered for the best entry. Runners-up will receive a book token to the value of one guinea. Entries by first post on Friday, February 6, to TOBY COMPETITION No. 53, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Report on Competition No. 50

(Answer! Answer!)

Competitors were invited to draft an apparently innocuous Parliamentary Question and a deadly Supplementary. Rather too many entries relied on the kind of heavy facetiousness that is followed in Parliamentary Reports by "(Laughter.)" In some cases the Supplementary had no connection with the original question at all. The lowish standard of ruthlessness, while throwing an agreeable light on the essential niceness of readers, did not make for a scintillating entry.

The winner of the framed *Punch* original is:

JOHN L. MACKWOOD
ITCHENOR
CHICHESTER HARBOUR
SUSSEX

CHESTNUT GROVE

Phil May contributed to *PUNCH* from 1893 until his death in 1903.



Passenger (rising politely). "EXCUSE ME, MUM, BUT DO YOU BELIEVE IN WOMAN'S RIGHTS?"
New Woman. "MOST CERTAINLY I DO."
Passenger (resuming seat). "OH WELL, THEN STAND UP FOR 'EM!"
May 9 1896

For this entry:

MEMBER (smiling a little, and slightly inaudible): May I ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the recent near-success of the Soviet Government, and the almost near-success of the United States, not only to fire rockets at the Moon but to consider landing human personnel on that globe, this country has taken any steps whatever to enter into scientific research in the same field?

PRIME MINISTER (sure of himself): The Hon. Member may relax, the answer is yes.

MEMBER (suddenly white with fury): WHY?

Runners-up were:

Question to the Paymaster-General:

Under what powers and on what terms are building materials supplied by the Ministry of Power to Local Authorities?

Supplementary:

In view of the Minister's assurance that he has no responsibility for maintaining such supplies, will he instruct the National Coal Board that consignments of slag and slate to Local Authorities via the coal cellars and, later, the dust-bins of my constituents should now cease?—J. H. Polfrey, Fircroft, Broadwater Rise, Guildford

Question to the Parliamentary and Financial Secretary to the Admiralty:

Could the Minister say how many Admirals on the active list are capable of riding a horse for ceremonial purposes?

Supplementary:

Is this number greater than the number of ships at present in service?—Lieutenant B. M. Smith, R.N., H.M.S. Dryad, Nr. Fareham, Hants.

MR. A. PITDIGGER (Deathnell Green): Can the Rt. Hon. Gentleman confirm that the average fine imposed upon females convicted of soliciting in the West End of London is £2?

HOME SECRETARY: Yes, sir.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION: Can the Rt. Hon. Gentleman confirm (a) that the average number of females soliciting in the West End every day is two thousand, (b) that the amount of the yield in fines, assuming a law enforcement efficiency of one-third, would amount to £1,333 per day or nearly half a million sterling per annum?—P. Roberts, 90 Kenilworth Avenue, London, S.W.19

TO THE MINISTER FOR WAR (question): What steps is the Right Hon. Member taking to ensure that the supply and maintenance of the Army's equipment is so directed that the troops' efficiency and morale cease to be undermined by false ideas of economy, instanced recently by the issue of under-strength canvas?

SUPPLEMENTARY: Since such faulty equipment may be placed on the home market, does the Right Hon. Member intend to protect shopkeepers against an increasing surplus stores trade already swollen by eight thousand left boots? He doubtless remembers that the ending of conscription will release even greater quantities of unwanted kit.—A. R. Porteous, 22 East Preston, Street, Edinburgh, 8

One guinea book tokens to these and to: R. Gresham Cooke, C.B.E., M.P., 31 Palace Street, London, S.W.1; Excubitor, Officers Mess, 16 Battalion, R.A.O.C., Bicester, Oxon

☆

On Becoming Man

I WELL remember how the race began.

I was, as I recall, a kind of fish,
But some strange fancy told me to be man.

The course of things responded to my wish,

And shortly I was sprouting arms and legs,

And straightening out my unaccustomed spine.

True to my vow, I gave up laying eggs;

I hunted sometimes, when the day was fine.

I took the dog for friend, and tamed the cow,

And learned to write, despite the mental strain,

And never told my friends and neighbours how

I sometimes longed to be a fish again.

— R. P. LISTER

Essence of Parliament



THERE are horses which run away without straying," the Attorney-General told the re-assembled House of Commons on Tuesday. I do not know if he was actually thinking of Mr. Randolph Churchill, who appears to be doing his best to qualify for the definition. But certainly the minds of Members seemed to be more on constituencies and Gallup polls and the unrevealed "date" than on the matter before them—the conditions on which the Electricity Board should borrow. The Socialists tried, it is true, to get a rise out of Mr. Macmillan at question-time. Mr. Macmillan told us about Germany that a country could not be called independent if it was compelled to adopt a foreign policy of neutrality. It was not so very long ago that, talking about Austria, he used exactly the opposite argument and said that compulsory neutrality was not in the least incompatible with independence. However, none of the Socialists noticed, and on electricity-borrowing the only real criticism of the Government came from the ex-Treasury back-benchers, Mr. Nigel Birch and Mr. Enoch Powell, who argued truly enough that there was no principle of accountancy in the nationalized industries. The Socialists preferred to go out to tea. "Do they never come to blows?" asked a French lady visitor in despair at so poor an entertainment.

The Lords, on the other hand, started off with a whang and beat the Government twice in two days—once about preserving deer and once about preserving lady peeresses. If you are going to have women in the Lords, and if you are going to have hereditary legislators, there seems at first sight little to be said against having women hereditary legislators—against allowing peeresses in their own right to take their seats; and

that was more or less what Lord Reading and Lord Salisbury argued, and what, breaking with his own party line, Lord Pethick-Lawrence argued with such passion that visitors in the Gallery burst out into loud and irregular applause. The official Socialist line, as expounded by Lord Alexander, that it dislikes the hereditary principle so much that it will not admit even so small an extension of it as this, seems by contrast churlish and pedantic. Still, since that was the Socialist line, it was difficult, even though the majority of their lordships managed it, to quarrel with Lord Hailsham's contention that there would be no possibility of bringing in such a contentious measure in the closing months of an old Parliament. The women won the vote, but it is likely to be some time yet before they have won their seats.

The oddity of the week was that the only issue that at all looked like turning into a party issue was education. There have in the past been bitter fights about denominational education, and it is possible that controversies of that sort may break out again. But if so, in

whatever form they may come up, they will not come up as party issues. Education in itself as a party issue is a novelty. One could not help feeling sympathy with poor Mr. George Thomas, the nicest living man and probably the only living man who still takes the party system seriously, when he asked why if education was a serious question it should not be a party question; but the more general feeling was with Mr. Partridge when he argued that all serious questions should be kept "above party." Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd

and Mr. Michael Stewart led off for their parties, and it was clear of both of them that they had been sent there to make party speeches and therefore party speeches they were determined to make. In fact everyone on both sides agrees that grammar schools are at the moment doing a very good job and that it would be a great folly to attack them, and

everybody equally agrees that some experiments in comprehensive schools might well be tried to see how they work out. The differences are not such as to make any need of a party issue. Yet the Socialists have foolishly allowed themselves to be manoeuvred into the position of appearing as the



Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd

enemies of the grammar schools, and the Conservatives—probably rightly—think that that will lose them a number of votes among that very class of clever, poor boys who would naturally be their strongest supporters. So they were determined to trot out their party slogans. Both Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Stewart are fluent speakers—it may be too fluent. It sounded as if Mr. Stewart knew rather more about education and Mr. Lloyd knew rather more about politics. But I doubt if many of the listeners of either of them were greatly interested in their arguments. Once more the more impressive arguments came from back benches—particularly from Mr. John Jennings, who uttered from experience impressive warnings against scrapping the tried for the untried; and a pleasant maiden speech from Mr. Abse of Pontypool, who asked about primary schools when everybody else was talking about secondary schools. I do not know what will come of a Member who talks from experience and takes a line of his own, but I hope that he is not persuaded to eschew these faults too rapidly.

— PERCY SOMERSET



Mr. Michael Stewart



In the City

More and Merrier

THE throng of unit trusts offering their wares to the investor is steadily thickening. Never in the history of this movement has the rate of growth been as rapid as over the past six months. As histories go it is a short one. The first unit trust formed in Britain was launched in the early 1930s. It came from the Municipal and General stable, which is still very much to the fore to-day and is now backed by one of the best investment banking firms in the City—Robert Benson, Lonsdale. This group not only stands for the highest standards of rectitude in the operation of its trusts but it can rest its claims on an impressive record.

In the 1930s the movement grew fast but not always wisely, and one or two of the mistakes that were made within it quite unfairly and unjustly tended to overshadow the good as well as the less good. By 1938 the unit trusts had sold rather more than £80m. of units to the public. Then came the war and the ban on further increases of their capital. With the lid held firmly against any possible increase in their resources the inevitable process of liquidation through sales of deceased estates began to eat into this total and it is probable that in the doldrums of the post-war years the total of their units outstanding dwindled to little more than £50m.

In 1953 the Capital Issues Committee took the lid off and immediately the resurgence of the movement began. It was led by those already in possession of the field, and here special reference must be made to the performance of such groups as the Selective Unit Trust Managers, which has recently made an offer of Selective Unit Trust Series "C" units, one of the most successful in this particular group. An investment of £99 made when these units first became available ten years ago would be worth £210 to-day.

More recently the running has been made by newcomers, and in this invasion of the unit trust field the

feature has been the appearance of some of the largest and most enterprising of banking and finance houses in the City. Reference has already been made to the alliance between Robert Benson, Lonsdale and the Municipal and General. The firm of Robert Fleming and Co., which pioneered the investment trust movement in this country more than one hundred years ago, have recently launched the Crosby Trust which at one fell swoop raised more than £1½m. There is a reassuring breath of restraint and candour in its appeals to the public. It reminds the investor that "these units in common with the underlying ordinary shares are subject to falls as well as rises in Stock Exchange values. This means that no one should invest in a unit trust who cannot set aside the money as an investment." Another well-known firm of investment bankers, Philip Hill, Higginson, have recently launched the British Shareholders Trust which has now sold more than ten million of its units to a value of over £5m.

S. G. Warburg and Co. are investment advisers to the Unicorn Trust which

was established in October 1957 and whose units, since then, have risen in price by over 38 per cent. Its recent offer of two million units went embarrassingly well. It was withdrawn before closing time and when only 1,500,000 units had been sold. The Stock Exchange was booming, the underlying securities were rising in price and the managers faced a loss on each unit sold at the fixed offer price—in its way a nice backhanded compliment to those who chose the Trust's portfolio. Looming up in the very near future is the "Shield Trust"—a good protective name—sponsored jointly by the House of Rothschild and the National Group—a promising combination.

Why this rush? It conforms with the Government's policy of popularizing investment. For the little man, and even for the not so little man, who wants a good spread of equities there is no form of investment to beat the well and intelligently managed unit trust. This century of the common man is also the century of the common stock.

— LOMBARD LANE



In the Country

Mild and Bitter

THERE must be quite a number of people who can reap reward from a spell of arctic weather—plumbers, for instance, garage proprietors, and orthopaedic surgeons—but I doubt if any of them lives in such dread of a mild winter as I do. It is not that I am a wildfowling fanatic, an abominable snowman, or an ice-hockey fiend; it is simply the thought of Will's face that motivates me, a thing I am confronted with every day. Will is our fruit foreman and a very knowledgeable one too, but his knowledge has increased his sorrow, and when he is really depressed he has the remarkable knack of filling every rut and bucket on the farm with his gloom.

Most winters Will is just his normal morose self and we are on very friendly terms, but every so often we run into one of those black patches when the temperature refuses to drop below forty at the start of February and has climbed

to the sixty mark by the end of it—and I have a nasty feeling we may be in for one now. "Pay for it—pay for it for sure," Will will mutter with a heavy sigh if I mention the sunshine, and after a day or two I shall dare greet him neither with "good" nor even with "morning." Only by merely grunting at him can I evade responsibility for the continued warmth.

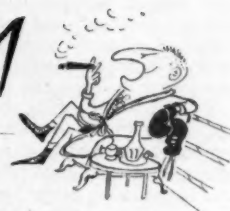
Of course, nearly all farmers want a frost before winter is over, and never has the need been greater than this year, for apart from drying the land up it improves the tilth of the soil, breaking down the lumps, as an oven does to damp salt. But Will does not care a jot about the tilth; he wants the frost to perform an entirely negative function, to retard growth, not to assist it (it will not even, as is sometimes believed, destroy the bugs and aphidians). For it is when the buds bloom early that the trouble starts—then that they fall victim, like children who have outgrown their strength, to the inevitable throwbacks of the season, the sudden sharp frosts and the nagging April winds.

So frozen pipes will be nothing to the worries we shall have if they don't freeze—and when everyone else is peering eagerly around the countryside for the first shoots of spring, Will and I will be keeping an anxious eye on our orchards, hoping to goodness that the buds will hold their fire.

— GREGORY BLAXLAND



CRITICISM



BOOKING OFFICE

By a Different Route

The Unknown Chekhov. Translated with an introduction by Avrahm Yarmolinsky. Peter Owen, 25/-

IN one sense the whole of Chekhov's work—and considering that he died at forty-four the bulk of it is remarkable—is unknown to us as to all non-Russians. Obvious though the point may be, it is often forgotten that an author known only in translation does not and cannot equal the original: he may be good, he might even conceivably be better, but he is inevitably different. Any art assumes an audience capable of appreciating it directly, but the reader of a translation is at two removes from the original. He is not reading what the author wrote, and what he is reading is an attempt to reproduce in different terms its effect on still another person: he gets not even a photograph, but a portrait.

Thus from the very first, certain things popularly thought of in this country as characteristic of Chekhov were points that for him and for the Russian reader did not exist at all, points exclusively concerned with translation—and with Constance Garnett's translation. The fact that in this volume many of these turns of phrase are absent, replaced by others that for an English reader are doubly unexpected and evocative, reinforces the title's promise. I for one find it quite startling when such a familiar Chekhov personage as an examining magistrate, talking to his friend the doctor, describes a charming widow as a *hot dish*, or when the good old town of P— (which for us is as characteristically Russian as N—) is said to be a *one-horse town*, or when the elderly chairman of a Board complains of someone's tendency to *get things balled up*...

But it would be quite unjust to imply that there is a great deal of this kind of thing; and the fact is that such shocks are salutary. The author did not allow

for their presence, and the Russian reader for whom he was writing does not feel them, but they help our appreciation by reminding us to adjust, shaking us out of that mood of unheeding complacency into which so many people slide when reading.

Most—about two-thirds—of this collection consists of stories, printed with their dates in the order in which they were written. In those in the Garnett translation, Mr. Yarmolinsky points out, "regrettably, such an arrangement is lacking . . . and indeed, the contents of the volumes seem to have been grouped at random." It is interesting to be able at least to pretend that one can see in the first humorous sketches, written when Chekhov was little more than twenty, the seeds of the philosophic

compassion in the long story "The Peasants"—of almost twenty-five years later, and in "A Visit to Friends," which has reminders of both *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*. The early sketches seem pretty thin and laboured in their fun, but when did humour ever really succeed in translation?

The last section of the book includes, besides such curiosities as two versions of what would now be considered a rather corny stage monologue and two pieces that are in effect newspaper leading articles, a long account of Chekhov's laborious, painful journey across Siberia to the prison island of Sakhalin. This also is journalism, straight reporting for a Petersburg newspaper. No doubt for the Russian reader it is in grain different from the stories; but for us, because of translation, the texture of the narrative is identical.

And it is in this that we really do get what can be called "the unknown Chekhov": for the first time, we get a feeling of being in touch with him personally. There are reasons obvious enough—the account is in the first person, and at one or two points he digresses sadly about the question of punishment, what it means, what it is for, whether it is effective—but I think there is also something more subtle. One had always judged him to be a pleasant character, and this mysteriously seems to prove it.

— RICHARD MALLETT

NOVEL FACES—LIII



ANGELA THIRKELL

Such dotty darlings, are they not, Miss Thirkell's, Moving in small but such exclusive circles.

NEW NOVELS

The Lunatic Republic. Compton Mackenzie. Chatto, 15/-

According to Sir Compton the first humans to arrive on the moon, in 1997, are an English commercial traveller, innocent of science, and a tremendously boring Chinese physicist pained to find that the moon had been ravaged by a nuclear war three thousand years earlier, and that true Communism had been long since brought to perfection by the

survivors. This race of little men with blue faces is happily standardized. By compulsory A.I., and euthanasia at the age of one hundred and ninety-nine, they have pegged their population; sex, crime, money, privilege and jealousy are out, sameness takes the place of religion, and sport, TV, and a deadly vitamin diet are swallowed by everyone to order.

Except that he fails to explain how a system designed to pulverize the mind produces civilized leaders, Sir Compton manages his technical problems adroitly, and his amusing picture of this contented and appalling régime is a warning satire on the way things are moving, pretty fast, in our own world. — E. O. D. K.

The Fire. Audrey Davenport. *André Deutsch*, 12/6

Miss Davenport's first novel must be unique in that it is a story of undercover politics conceived and written in the idiom of the womens' magazines. The heroine, Nicola Strayne, half-French, half-English, and four years widowed, is domiciled in Paris with a correct, rather dull French lover, who is planning to regularize the position by marriage. But Nicola is still obsessed with her crypto-Communist husband, supposedly burned to death and possessing the requisite twisted smile and crooked nose; while the past is ready to pounce in the person of Luke's sinister Party Boss, who summons her to Berlin where, in the Soviet zone, a live Luke is lurking and—after several waves of desire have flooded Nicola—his true character, conditioned by ideological training, is abundantly revealed. There is much generalization about men (how defenceless they look on awakening, or with backs turned and shoulders bent, etc.) and how different they are from women; while the frequent polemical excursions are a powerful argument in favour of Nicola's grandfather's dictum that "a woman is not made for intellectual purposes," however much one may disagree with this pronouncement. — J. M.-R.

13 Days. Ian Jefferies. *Cape*, 15/-

Admirers of the British Army may well be irritated by Mr. Jefferies' suggestion that in 1948 it became one large racket as it pulled out of Palestine, running narcotics and selling stolen equipment right and left. His hero, a National Service Sapper sergeant impermeable to discipline, steals ammunition for the Jews because as a moralist he disapproves of the Arabs' monopoly of our surplus arms; but he is a moralist sufficiently mixed up to accept bribes from the Arabs, arrange the murder of an awkward friend, and take pot shots at the Palestine Police.

At the same time Mr. Jefferies has a healthily irreverent wit and a lean, caustic idiom that seems to come naturally. The opening half of this interesting first novel is very funny, while the hero, like the young man in



L'Etif, is adjusting his philosophy to sharp practice; in its later part the book loses bite for the sake of straighter thrills. — E. O. D. K.

The Life and Times of Frédéric Lemaître. Actor, Lover and Idol of Paris. Robert Baldick. *Hamish Hamilton*, 25/-

"For many years," wrote Gautier in 1855, "I have never missed a creation by Frédéric Lemaître . . . He can hurl the imprecation of Ruy Blas at the council of ministers, and blither his clownish nonsense in a village square. As Richard d'Arlington, he throws his wife out of the window as easily as he cooks the mountebank's cabbage soup." Frédéric was indeed a versatile prodigy: he could terrify, horrify, move to tears and reduce to hysterical laughter. He could combine the sublime and grotesque as well as Hugo himself. And he was not only the great romantic actor: Kean, Robert Macaire, Ruy Blas. Throughout his extravagant life, from the day he was born with the nineteenth century till the day he died from cancer in 1876, blessing his sons and daughter in a final, wordless performance, he was the epitome of Romanticism. In this vivid, vigorous biography, Dr. Baldick raises the curtain on a constantly imposing central figure. There is a cast (as the cliché goes) of hundreds: most of the eminent people of the day. And the décor of nineteenth-century Paris, revolutionary, picturesque, gay and kaleidoscopic, never fails, and will never fail, to charm. — J. R.

The Sultan: The Life of Abdul Hamid II. Joan Haslip. *Cassell*, 25/-

Miss Joan Haslip, who has written biographical studies of Lady Hester Stanhope, Parnell and Lucrezia Borgia, now turns her attention to Abdul

Hamid II, the Turkish Sultan who was born in 1842. After an unhappy childhood and early manhood Abdul Hamid succeeded his brother Marad, who had been declared incapable through alcoholic deterioration of the brain. He then ruled for thirty-three years as an absolute monarch.

Abdul Hamid soon learned the classic diplomatic game of keeping his country independent by creating friction between the Great Powers and encouraging jealousy between the Serbs, Greeks and Bulgarians. His dependence on Germany, however, brought about disastrous results for Turkey in World War I. In this carefully-written biography Miss Haslip plunges with zest into the intrigues of the period. She has obviously developed something approaching affection for a man whose tyranny was notorious, but she will hardly succeed in gaining many admirers for Abdul Hamid in this country. — R. G.

Here, Of All Places. Osbert Lancaster. *Murray*, 21/-

Mr. Osbert Lancaster, the plain man's Banister Fletcher, has collected into one volume the contents of *Homes Sweet Homes* and *Pillar to Post*, with some new material from the U.S.A., and so produced an architectural handbook of unique quality. Drawings and commentary alike are not only funny but wise and instructive as well. "All the architecture in this book is completely imaginary," says an author's note. O that it were so!—all too often, all too corporeally, its origins stand about us. — B. A. Y.

The D.A.'s Man. Harold R. Danforth and James D. Horan. *Gollancz*, 21/-

The memoirs of Harold R. Danforth, alias "Dan O'Brien of Boston" (he actually attended Boston University), for sixteen years an undercover investigator in the New York District Attorney's office, have rightly been awarded an "Edgar" (after E. A. Poe) for the best true crime story of the year. Set down by James D. Horan in a functional style recalling Dashiell Hammett's "Continental Op" series, they are factually absorbing throughout: no literary trimmings are required when chronicling the adventures of one who posed successfully as a pimp (the Lucky Luciano Case), a homosexual, an habitué of the Bucket of Blood on Eighth Avenue, and was accused by the mistress of Louis Lepke's trigger-man of trifling with her affections. The sinister figure of Dutch Schultz, mean and sartorially shabby, with his bodyguards and mouthpiece (who wore ermine-lined slippers), passes in the parade of violence, to be shot down by a gunman named Rosencranz; vice rackets and corrupt politicians were exposed and even College basketball became a fix; but perhaps the most unusual criminal remains the gluttonous yet captivating Colonel Halquiere, who wore elastic

stockings and "resembled a beer-keg with legs": disappearing without trace on Christmas Eve 1946. — J. M-R.

Doctor with Two Aunts. Tom Girtin. Hutchinson, 21/-

This is a biography of John Wolcot, the late-eighteenth-century satirical versifier who wrote under the name of "Peter Pindar," though the title may not make this quite plain. It is rather heavily weighted on the side of the picturesque and rumbustious, and though it is full of quotations, often from manuscript sources, it does not mention where these manuscripts are. It would have gained from some systematic discussion of Pindar's relation to the whole tradition of abusive verse, at least since Churchill. However, if its aim is entertainment rather than the advancement of learning, that is reasonable enough, considering Peter Pindar claimed to write only for money and is now remembered more as a synthetic "character" than for any contribution to the development of English satire or English politics.

On that level this is an amusing account of an adventurer who was in turn West country surgeon, member of the Governor of Jamaica's staff, business manager of John Opie, scourge of the Royal Academy and of George III, London literary diner-out, bully-boy and finally extinct, pitiable volcano.

— R. G. G. P.

The Fleet that Had to Die. Richard Hough. Hamish Hamilton, 18/-

The eighteen-thousand-mile journey made by Admiral Rozhdestvensky's fleet during the Russo-Japanese quarrels of 1904-5 was intended to save Russia from humiliating defeat. The armada was powerful enough in terms of fighting ships, but it was ill equipped with men and materials. This Russian Navy evinced contrasting moods of despair and buoyancy during the voyage, and when they reached the point of battle the Sea of Japan probably witnessed more human suffering, bravery and cowardice than any other ocean has seen in the annals of naval warfare. In contrast to the complete devotion to duty and loyalty of the Japanese to their Mikado, the Russians, both officers and bluejackets, had traitors among them whose only thought was for self-preservation.

The book is mainly concerned with the journey, the problems of refuelling, the admiral's struggle against the incompetence and treachery of his subordinates, and the mockery of the world. It is not primarily historical but is a true story unfolded in what is altogether an interesting account of a heroic but useless naval action.

— A. V.

A Foreign Affair. Andrew Graham. Macmillan, 15/-

The hero of this second novel by the author of *The Club* is "His Excellency Sir Augustus Gore-Featherston, Baronet,

K.C.M.G., Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Parasang" (where, owing to the activities of a nearby dictator named General Chukah), trouble is brewing. He is a student of oriental languages, has been a Buddhist monk, hums Anglican hymns translated into French, and studies Chinese canine-cookery books ("Pom frite, Purée de pug"), etc. Mr. Graham has obviously much affection for these eccentricities, but ample scorn for the *Chargé d'Affaires*, Gilbert Dredge, who has a wife called Meg and buys "even his diplomatic uniforms off the peg"; he offers his guests Nigerian Pouilly and tinned mulligatawny, while Sir Augustus drinks sharkfin soup and dry champagne. Minor characters are called Colonel Gâteau, Miss Widgeon and Mr. Buzzard; drinks are "libations" and Chinese servants "celestial gentlemen" (they also say "lice" and "wizz drive"); the Queen D. (for "Dowager") drops her g's, wears a Schiaparelli nightdress and practices witchcraft (apparently transforming General Chukah into a bullfrog, to be skewered on a British soldier's bayonet). Those readers who find the above kind of thing amusing, and also enjoy endless catalogues of food served at official dinners, will derive entertainment from a book the best description of which is heavy-handed A. G. Macdonnell.

— J. M-R.

Naming-Day in Eden. Noah Jonathan Jacobs. Gollancz, 15/-

This book badly needs an index, for those who will be most interested in it are precisely those who will want to refer later to the verbal oddities mentioned on every page. It is, in essentials, a collection of curious facts about the development of language in general and innumerable words in particular, written with a good deal of wit, but also, rather too often, with a facetious playfulness academic if not clerical in tone. This less welcome quality appears in the very design of the book, which is built on the roguish pretence that the accounts of Adam's linguistic adventures, in the Bible and in popular legend, tell the literal truth about the origin of language. Despite this mannered jocosity, most people should find the wealth of odd information entertaining.

— R. M.

AT THE PLAY

The Woman on the Stair
(WESTMINSTER)

JAMES PARISH's latest thriller, *The Woman on the Stair*, comes by way of TV, and shows signs of having been filled out for the stage. Its development is very leisurely, along two lines: the capture of the flash young burglar



Detective-Supt. Coates—RAYMOND HUNTLEY

[*The Woman on the Stair*
Jane Pringle—GWEN WATFORD

who has murdered the old lady upstairs, and the state of mind of her friend in the flat below, a blind girl who had passed the intruder on his way down the staircase and is able to help the police.

As there is never any question of her having been involved in the murder, Mr. Parish spends much too long telling us exactly what it is like to be blind and showing us just why his sympathetic Superintendent becomes lost in admiration for the girl's courage and character. We see her giving a lengthy Braille lesson to a friend, struggling with press photographers after the murder, and enlarging on her life story to the Superintendent. She happens to be played by Gwen Watford extremely well, but all this is really beside the point. It might be part of a quite different and more serious

the play, of the blind girl's extra-sensitive impressions of the dramatic meeting on the stairs, is a good one, but not supported by enough invention. The play is quite well written, but it drags along rather sadly, and we are given very little to guess about.

Miss Watford's delicate handling of this difficult part makes one eager to see her in a piece in which she can have more scope. Raymond Huntley, who always seems to me far too good an actor to be bothered by clues, is as usual an excellent advertisement for the Yard. Tony Wright gives a reasonable account of the thug, and Diane Clare shows distinct promise as one of those film-drunk children who figure on the list of every probation officer, and whose moral principles are confused, if by nothing else, by adenoids.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Grass is Greener (St. Martin's—10/12/58), charming new comedy. *Irma la Douce* (Lyric—23/7/58), French underworld musical. *Chrysanthemum* (Prince of Wales—19/11/58), musical satire on penny dreadful.

—ERIC KEOWN

REP SELECTION

Oxford Playhouse, *Prince Genji*, new play, until February 7th.
Playhouse, Sheffield, *Love's Labour Lost*, until February 14th.
Belgrade, Coventry, *A Touch of the Sun*, until February 7th.
Theatre Royal, Lincoln, *Touch it Light*, until January 31st.

play, and it does little to screw up our excitement.

Mr. Parish's treatment of his burglar is also too discursive and off the ball. We know he is a revolting young man, and we know he is living with the trollop daughter of the caretakers of his victim's flat; we don't need slices of their gruesome domestic life. The central idea of

AT THE PICTURES

The Roots of Heaven
Anna Lucasta

THERE are points to criticize about *The Roots of Heaven* (Director: John Huston)—artificialities, like the cliché-character of the man-weary heroine discovered in the flashy tropical bar—but

as a whole it's very good indeed. I don't know the original novel by Romain Gary; I repeat what I've said before on similar occasions—I think a film should be judged as it is, without regard to its original basis. Sometimes it may be possible to explain excessive staginess, for instance, by the fact that the story started as a play, but unless there is some such objection to the film as a film I believe there is no point in examining how closely it sticks to its original. The author collaborated with Patrick Leigh Fermor on the screenplay of this, and it seems fairly certain that the main point of his book comes over as effectively as he could wish. Even if it doesn't, as I say, I think that's irrelevant; this film, though uneven, is good.

Its greatest strength is that in essentials, in the important qualities, it is unusual. I have mentioned one cliché-character as representative of certain artificialities, but they are few and small points by comparison. The film has an unusual theme, in that the principal character is driven—indeed, obsessed—by an unusual motive. His life is dedicated to the saving of the African elephant, which is being slaughtered in terrifying quantities by people who kill it for fun (hunters) or profit (ivory traders). The enormous gentle creatures—"the strongest on earth, yet no animal fears them"—are being steadily and ever more quickly exterminated.

The story shows the battle of this man, Morel (Trevor Howard), against indifference and ridicule and active opposition, to get the killing of them stopped by law. At first he is alone, though still a great nuisance to the authorities (the scene is French Equatorial Africa) as he becomes more actively aggressive; then, gradually, supporters join him. First the girl (Juliette Greco), then an alcoholic British ex-officer (Errol Flynn), then various people regarded as cranks for one reason or another, then an African chief (Edric Connor) with dreams of native independence, who hopes to use his notoriety . . . The climax is literally a battle, with guns: the elephants stampede to safety, and the men fight each other.

PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

An exhibition of fifty years of *Punch* cinema cartoons and caricatures is on view at the Leicester Square Theatre, London, by arrangement with the Rank Organization.

The *Punch* in the Theatre Exhibition has started its 1959 tour. It can now be seen at the Guildford Theatre, and the Theatre Royal, Windsor, and will be opened at the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, on Tuesday, February 3, by Mr. Laurence Irving.



Danny Johnson—SAMMY DAVIS, JR.

Anna—EARTHA KITT

CinemaScope and Eastman Colour (photography: Oswald Morris) make the whole thing visually splendid. There are plenty of fine big spectacular scenes, but the wide screen is used also more than I ever remember before for immense cut-off, fragmentary close-ups, which are often extraordinarily effective and significant.

Besides Mr. Howard, who is admirable, there are a great many other excellent players, several of whom appear very briefly (e.g., Orson Welles in a brilliantly amusing burlesque of a popular broadcaster). As sheer entertainment, the piece is tremendous; its faults are unimportant.

Anna Lucasta (Director: Arnold Laven) is highly entertaining, but it flouts too many conventions. It is not homogeneous: great stretches of it are quite broad and very funny comedy, but there are also passages of heavy drama almost tragic in tone.

It began as a play about Polish-Americans, but this is an all-Negro version—written for the screen by the original playwright, Philip Yordan—and in manner it is still theatrical. One gets an impression of over-rehearsal in the quick-fire dialogue, funny as it often is: the retort comes every time as it were on the rhythmic beat, not as if genuinely produced after thought by the speaker. Nevertheless dramatic contrivance is of the essence here, and there is not much point in criticizing the piece as if it were meant to be a picture of reality. Basically it is a "powerful" story about an erring daughter (Eartha Kitt) and an angry father (Rex Ingram) whose rage against her is made more passionate by his consciousness of a guilt the reason for which is only hinted at; but on the surface it is an almost farcical account of an attempt by the rest of the family to marry her to a visiting young man for the sake of his money. Fun and drama don't mix, and in anything that tries to mix them fun will win; it's impossible to take the thing seriously.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Operation Amsterdam is a race-against-time war story, competent but not very inspiring, about how the industrial diamonds were snatched from Holland just before the invading Germans could get them in 1940. *Room at the Top* is very good indeed—details next week. Other varied offerings in London include a good big Western, *The Big Country* (21/1/59); a good well-done Danish picture about teenagers and their parents, *The Young Have No Time* (21/1/59); an amusing French trifle, *Parisiennne* (7/1/59), in the same programme with the very striking British cartoon, *The Little Island* ("Survey," 7/1/59); and the two Swedish winners, *Wild Strawberries* (5/11/58) and *Summer with Monika* (24/12/58).

Releases include *The Old Man and the*

Sea (10/12/58), which Spencer Tracy makes interesting to watch although it remains obviously a story that was meant to be read; *Houseboat* (7/1/59), entertaining hokum; and *Mardi Gras* (31/12/58), a musical with good bits.

— RICHARD MALLET

ON THE AIR

Tune Spotting

"SPOT the Tune" (A-R) wastes half an hour harmlessly enough. In

fact I can see that for those who are eager to watch representative members of the great viewing public exposing themselves to the cruelty of lights and cameras, this show might easily have a hypnotic appeal. For my own part I have always preferred to have my entertainment provided by professional performers, duly rewarded according to the rates insisted on by their trade union. I have never been able to throw off the embarrassment I feel when obliged to watch ordinary human beings demonstrating by their ineptness the plain truth that successful appearance before a paying audience depends on experience, mastery of technique, hard work, and what for want of a better word is nowadays called personality. The ladies and gentlemen who in this show strive, for our delight and edification, to recall the names of tunes and thereby earn cash prizes (plus, presumably, expenses) have for me no place in the world of entertainment. I would sooner see the professionals concerned (Jackie Rae, Marion Ryan, and the Peter Knight band) exerting themselves and their various accomplishments for the full half-hour, without all the rubbishy trappings. Mr. Rae is one of those engaging phenomena thrown up by television—a pleasant young man who can compère a show with a casual touch that never for a moment reflects the strain of rehearsal. He is also something of a joker, and most of his jests with the lay contestants are guaranteed to make any sensitive twelve-year-old wince. This may not be his fault, but I can find no script-writer's name among the credits. Miss Ryan is a gay, plump little young lady who can sing popular tunes efficiently in a fashionable manner (there must be about a dozen such singers at present, and I envy those who can tell any three of them apart.) Mr. Knight's band, to judge by the snatches of tunes it is permitted to play, as well as by its accompaniment to Miss Ryan's song spot, seems to be as capable as most of the radio and TV bands, which is saying a good deal. But in this fumbling children's party of a show they all seem to be wasting their talents.

The glum and saturnine Ed Morrow, whose trademarks are cigarette smoke and a Humphrey Bogart leer, has done a technically marvellous job with "Small World" (BBC ex CBS). When you have



MARION RYAN

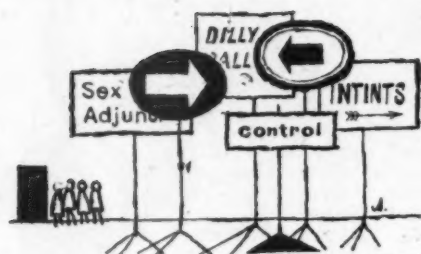
JACKIE RAE

said that you have said nearly all, for much of the argument and lecturing that goes on among the far-flung protagonists (they are filmed and recorded simultaneously at points all over the world) is the kind of thing they would all do better in the relative peace and quiet of a magazine article. Still, it is interesting to watch that abiding cliché of the modern world, "the clash of personalities." Did there not emerge, for instance, something almost sinister from the steam-rolling rhetoric of Franz-Josef Strauss as he bullied Aneurin Bevan the other week, with General Gruenther grinning on the sidelines?

"The Black and White Minstrel Show" (BBC) has returned in good form, adroitly produced by George Inns. I notice that the Toppers are now required to sing, a function they perform in their traditionally ladylike manner. Kenneth Connor is in danger of upsetting this excellent show if he is not checked. He should realize that when a leading comic is seen to be *straining* after laughs (and often, I fear, without success) even his most faithful admirers will begin to feel uneasy. Hamlet's advice to those who play the clown is still relevant.

A couple of weeks ago, through some elaborate slip of the pen, I suggested that Derek Hart had dealt a shade impertinently with Sir Ralph Richardson in "To-night." He did not. The man I had in mind was his colleague, Geoffrey Johnson Smith. I apologize to all concerned.

— HENRY TURTON



Beginning a Novelette of the Future by

We're Strangers Here Ourselves

CLAUD COCKBURN

In the sheltered valley in the Andes where they had made their home since 1959, the Eastcliffes and the Waynes had been insulated from the great changes that had come over the world. Now, in 2032, they return to England.

THE travel agent at Amazon West told Henry Eastcliffe that if he and his little party wanted to be really central to London the best hotel was still the old Mountbatten at Badminton. "Zonal facilities with extrazonal amenities," he said. "And naturally the farther out you are the quicker you get in."

"Meaning what?" Jane Wayne wanted to know. Henry looked at her with love and apprehension. Love because she was lovely, apprehension because he obscurely felt that in the new life the two Eastcliffes and the two Waynes were making for, her habit of wanting quick answers to quick questions could make trouble for her.

The agent spoke as though to a child. "Look at it this way," he said. "You wouldn't expect to go a couple of hundred miles in as short a time as you'd go, say, from New York to Moscow. Same applies to interior travel in, say, England. After all, the farther the quicker. 'Am I techno-right?'"

If Jane was going to ask another question it was smothered by a smooth flow of "Quite so" and "Absolutely" from her brother Bernard, who diverted the agent to a discussion of currency problems.

Watching the Wayne pair and her brother Henry, Ann Eastcliffe noted, not for the first time, how markedly the two male cousins had inherited from their common great-grandfather Eastcliffe that sage elder's dominant characteristic—caution.

"Dominant," she reflected, was the

word. For it was great-grandpa's caution which, basically, was responsible for their present situation.

It was he who, in the year 1959, had had, as he used to phrase it, "the audacity of true prudence." He had been a well-informed man with a capacity to analyse and ruthlessly evaluate his information. In the spring of 1959 he had the clear vision to see that civilization was going to pot, and

the thing for a thinking man, with family responsibilities, was to clear out—go while the going was good.

His appraisal of the situation had been reluctant yet ineluctable. "Of two things, one," he was fond of saying. Either world war, or not. If world war, then outwiping of mankind or reduction of human species to diseased, lunatic barbarism. If no world war, then the Communist powers—he carried figures on the Chinese birthrate about with him—would nevertheless, with their brutal élan, overwhelm the hesitant, ill-organized west.

"I do not propose," great-grandpapa had written in a letter to his son, still treasured in the family archives at Andes View, "to end my days as a robot at the beck of some Mongolian Frankenstein."

He sold his £150,000-worth of blue-chip industrials and took off with his whole family for a lofty, only moderately fertile interior valley of the Andes. He set up geiger counters in the cabbage patch and the stream, in the cow-sheds and the scrubby oatfields, and inspected them morning and evening.

"No fall-out in *our* porridge," he said proudly at breakfast every day for



*"And now, for Lydia Tidmarsh of Benger's Pond, Frampton—
'The Skaters Waltz.'"*

nearly forty-five years, and when his grandchildren fidgeted and had bad thoughts about the limitations of life in that secure valley the old man's son and his daughter, who had married Mr. Wayne and brought him with her, used to look at them and say "You owe a lot to your grandfather—we all do."

Right through great-grandpa's day the family—augmented by a half-dozen other refugees during the crisis of 1967—had continued listening to the radio news bulletins, waiting for It to happen. Then, reasoning logically, that there was nothing they could do about It when It did, they severed by general consent even this line of communication with the doomed outer world.

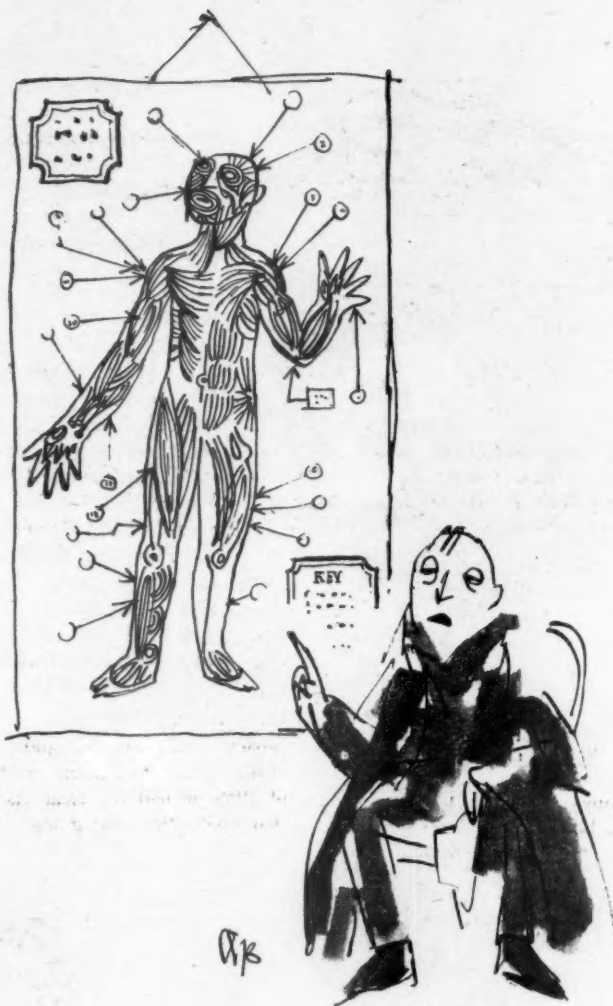
Inherited caution might have kept Henry and his sister Ann, Bernard and his sister Jane there in the valley all their lives—though the other members of the community had all at one time and another wandered away into the surrounding mountains, some comatose with *ennui*, others gibbering crazily about "going out to see what goes on."

However, in the early two thousand and thirties a series of cloudbursts—unprecedented and, so far as they were concerned, inexplicable—settled the question. The thin soil of that valley dribbled away in the floodwater like brown ale going down a sink. Final crisis came when their domesticated llamas, starving, broke into the library and ate the file of *The Times* for January to March 1959.

Henry and Bernard suggested they look for another, more favoured, Valley. The two lovely girls rolled their flashing eyes to heaven and tapped their feet. The hell, they said, with that sort of talk. "Let's," they said, "go somewhere *real* for a change." As for instance where? As for instance, said the girls, England.

Up to the last moment Henry Eastcliffe and Bernard Wayne had hoped, even assumed, that lack of money would frustrate the whole exhausting, dangerous expedition. All they had in the financial line were a few small bags of gold dust, panned in one of the river valleys. And for as long as they could remember it had been axiomatic in the Eastcliffe and Wayne families that by now, 2032—the world was back to barter—gold would be valueless.

The travel agent was merely puzzled by Bernard's hesitant manner with the



"That's how I feel, Doctor."

gold-bags. "Quite all right," he said, running his finger down a list. "G for Gold's on the validity schedule for Intints. A man that's got his Intints right can't go far wrong, can he?"

"Intints" materialized as a sizeable bundle of international interim payment coupons, valid for three days after issue. Before expiry of that period, the agent explained, they must be exchanged for the currency of whatever area the holder of Intints happened to be in.

While the agent briefly offered this information Ann looked at him entranced—the first man of the outer world she had set eyes on.

"I don't see much wrong with his

genes," she remarked to Jane, in what she meant to be an undertone, but the agent heard it.

"Just what d'you imagine *would* be wrong with my genes?" he wanted to know. "There's people come in here to get a travel ticket and next thing you know they're making intimate speculations."

Ann naturally did not wish to explain what she, nurtured on the axioms of Andes View, had thought might have happened, radioactively, to his genes. She had been wondering if he had, maybe, three legs behind his counter. She said apologetically "I just meant your genes seemed fine, absolutely fine."



"I aim to keep them that way," said the agent, still huffed. He put on a super-official face and answered Henry's questions about the fare.

"Which are you?" demanded the agent. "On Purpose or d'you want the Dilly-dally?"

Henry was making an effort to sort this one out without confessing ignorance and losing dignity, but Jane said "We are bestially ignorant and slow-witted. Tell us slowly, slowly, what you mean."

On Purpose travel, it seemed, was non-stop direct flight from one major Zone Centre to another. On a Dilly-dally flight you could stop over at places *en route*.

"Of course there's a charge for that," said the agent.

"For the fast non-stop flight?"

"Of course not," said the agent. "That's free. Naturally. Must keep things moving, mustn't we?"

By arrangement between the principal Governments, travellers moving direct between major zones travelled free, in the interests of trade, the exchange of ideas, and mutual understanding. People who deliberately travelled on the slower routes, with stop-overs, were assumed not to have anything of great import to exchange or communicate and were charged accordingly.

Henry said that in that case they would certainly go On Purpose.

"Quite," said the agent. "Well then, if you'd just take this form along to the International Inspector at the other end of the counter she'll validate, and then if you'll come back to me I can issue the tickets."

The International Inspector had a face as featureless as a melon and a voice as brightly annoying as *réveillé* on a black morning.

"Just answer questions A, D and G on the form," she said. "The other spaces are for official use only. Now, what are your contributions going to be?"

"Contributions?" Bernard Wayne clutched his remaining gold-dust bag protectively.

"Travelling On Purpose you must have some Contribution you aim to make to English life. Just put Industrial, Commercial, Cultural or Miscellaneous."

They all decided to write down "Miscellaneous."

"And now, under D, your Qualifications."

The four categories were the same,

and they all wrote "Miscellaneous" again, though Jane added the word "charm" in brackets, and Ann, seeing this over her shoulder, put "*joie de vivre*."

"And now, under G," said the Inspector, looking at the two girls, "are you travelling as Associates or Sex Adjuncts?"

"I don't know that I care to go on record as either," said Jane.

"What does each imply?" asked Ann.

"Nothing, actually," said the Inspector. "It's for the International Bureau of Social Statistics only. After all, a person has to be something, otherwise where could he or she be filed?"

"File us as Associates, then," said Jane. "It has more dignity."

"Good," said the Inspector. "And now here are your Welcome Cards."

She handed to each of them a card stamped with the words "England Greets You. Do good to England and England will do you good."

(What changes will they find in England? Don't miss next week's fabulous instalment.)

☆

☆

I Think Continually

With acknowledgments to Stephen Spender

I THINK continually of those who were truly great,
But in whom the flowering of the spirit occurred slightly late;
Of those who at school were accounted dim-witted and dreamy
Like Churchill, or Pasteur (declared *médiocre* at *chimie*);
Of those whose I.Q. seemed distinctly below the norm,
Like Newton who at twelve was bottom of his form.

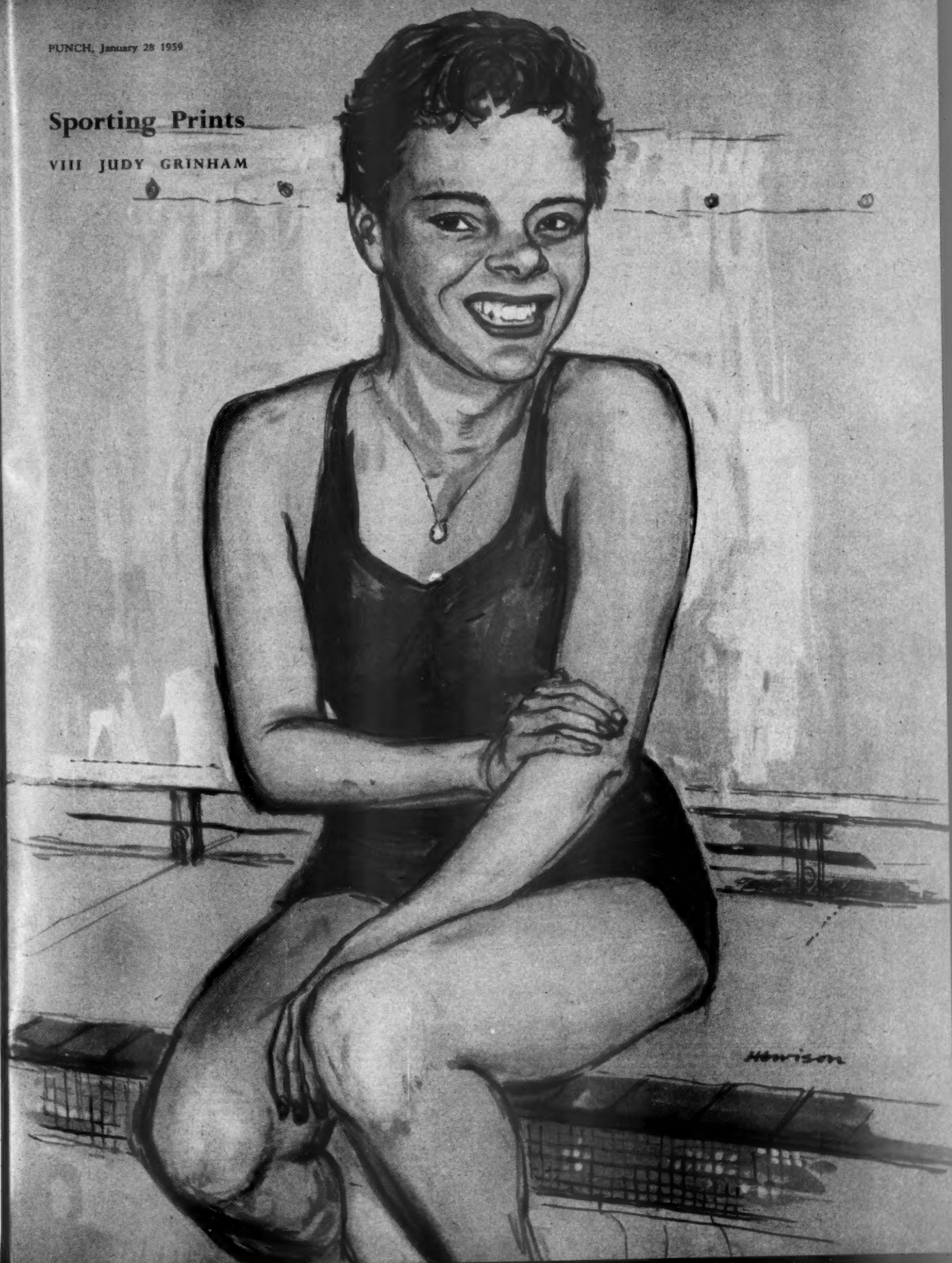
I think, too, of those prematurely deprived of the gown,
Like Betjeman J., whom Oxford unkindly sent down;
Of the failed B.A.s like Alfred Edward Housman,
Or that mathematical prodigy Ramanujan;
Of those who, like Wordsworth and Darwin, were deemed to be
Undeserving of anything more than a poll degree.

I think continually of those who were truly great;
Whom the icy examiner signally failed to deflate;
Who refused to believe they had finally missed the bus
At eleven-, eighteen-, or even at twenty-one-plus.

— E. V. MILNER

Sporting Prints

VIII JUDY GRINHAM



Interview

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

PSYCHOLOGIST in leading London Advertising Agency requires reliable Secretary (female, under 30).—*The Times*

"PLEASE sit down, Miss Tilwright. You *are* under thirty? Splendid. It's just a question of symbiotic communion, arrested response patterns, ethical conflicts and so on. Ever worked in advertising before?"

"No."

"I see. Well, we all have to start some time. Now then, tell me what you think of when I say the word White."

"Black."

"You do? That's very interesting. Here of course our thoughts run white, whiter, whitest. Never mind. And when I say the word Bright?"

"Corn Laws."

"What?"

"Corn Laws."

"Dear me, Miss Tilwright, I'm afraid we're very mixed up there, aren't we. However, I always make allowances at the beginning of an interview."

"Thank you. I'm afraid I'm a little nervous."

"Of course, of course. A struggle between competing excitation-gradients to determine the main axis of structural alignment. Just relax. How many kinds of living can you mention?"

"Good. Bad. Er—Loose? H'm."

"H'm. Come, come now. What about *gracious*, eh?"

"Oh yes, of course."

"Of course. Functional continuity and social integration in suprabiological juxtaposition. What are you looking at, Miss Tilwright?"

"Nothing. Well, that couch, actually."

"Oh, the couch! Don't worry about that. It's just for when I have any of the executives in here. Now then. Can you see a donkey in the room?"

"A donkey?"

"An elephant, then?"

"I'm afraid I—"

"No need to be afraid. My tie's elephant, your coat's donkey. The walls are sky, the carpet earth. Colours, Miss Tilwright. Colours. The Agency handles several *couture* houses."

"Thanks. I thought for a minute—"

"I know, you thought I was being a bit morphological, ha-ha! Enzymic catalysis and all that, eh? No, no. Anyway, donkey and elephant are as dead as a door-nail—if you forgive the fanciful expression. Colours change all the time. I've got this week's list here... 'Crab, bolster, tennish-green, gum, plinth, sandwich, dirt...' However, you know what Freud said about parasympathicomimetic hormones. We don't want to get on to

neurohormonal inertia. What do you use for the washing-up? Quick!"

"Water."

"Anything in it?"

"Dishes."

"No. But never mind. Describe a dish so that fifteen million women want to buy it."

"Er."

"I'll count three. One, Two Three."

"This attractive dish."

"Ye-es. Give me three colours for a sink-tidy."

"Red, yellow and pink."

"Well... passion-fruit, flame, blush. Who wears an eye-patch?"

"Moshe Dayan."

"I don't know what you're talking about, Miss Tilwright. Who invented Miss Rheingold?"

"Wagner?"

"Miss Tilwright. I'm sorry. I know it's none of my business, but I can't help thinking that your metabolism is unduly susceptible to internal stresses resulting from the interaction of external excitations with an oscillatory span of a larger order of magnitude than that of the dynamic equilibrium prevailing under normal conditions. But I intend to give you one more chance. Take this list of War Department surplus stores into the next room and prepare a display advertisement suitable for insertion in *Camping and Outdoor Hobbies*. Take your time. I'm going to lie down on the couch for ten minutes."



"It says 'Cogito ergo sum.'"

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